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I was told by a Kawasi

615 618 informant that a bride coming from a clan with a different totem to a Kawasi household was made to eat her father's totem as a sign of abandoning that totem's race or clan; but I could never verify this. There is a definite ceremony for transferring a re-marrying widow from her first to her second husband's clan; but this has nothing to do with the totem.

There is nothing to prevent a man in the Markami Tortoise phratry taking a wife from the Kawasi Tortoise phratry. In fact, if totems were of real significance, it is hard to see why there should be these two mutually exogamous Tortoise phratries. Nor is there anything to bar them intermarrying with the Hemla Tortoise clan in the Goat phratry; the same applies to the Goat and Buffalo phratries and the Goat and Buffalo clans in other phratries.

Another point that suggests that the phratry has arisen as a convenience for enlarging the matrimonial field is that each village is regarded as the *bhum* (earth or soil) of the individual Bison-horn clan that first settled it, not of the phratry. To give a few examples, Massenar is the *bhum* of the Atrami clan, Lendra and Singwaram of the Barse clan, Mandimarka of the Dodi clan, Durandarbha and Gumadasaka of the Hemla clan, Dugheli and Pharaspal of the Kalmu clan, Birya Gudra, Etipal and Bhusaras of the Kartami clan, Berma and Karrigudem of the Kunjami clan, Kondasaqli, Komarguda, Kodmair, Ursangal, Tetam and Koriras of the Birya Marvi, Chudala Gudra, Tarlaguda and Banjepalli of the Chudala Marvi, Palnar, Phulpan and Singaram of the Vetti. Each clan thus has villages that are far apart; there is no contiguity of all the villages that are the *bhum* of one clan, and therefore no compact clan-area as in the Abujhmar hills. Nor is there any phratry area; five contiguous villages may easily be the *bhum* of five clans each belonging to a different phratry. Even in the villages that are the *bhum* of one clan it is quite possible that the *perma* may be the only member of the clan in the village, and in every village there are settlements of all the clans with which the founder clan has intermarried, each clan that is big enough being allotted a separate quarter in the village for its houses, and clans of which there are only one or two representatives perhaps sharing a quarter with other clans of their phratry. Only a *perma* of the founder clan can mediate between the villagers and the Earth and Village Mother; and if that clan has retained its own clan-god, little heed is paid to the clan-god of the phratry or the parent-clan of the phratry. At the sacrifices to the Departed and the subsequent sacrificial meal at first-fruits ceremonies only the householder's *bhumkal* or fellow-clansmen may be present, not members of other clans in his phratry even. The division of the large Marvi, Markami and Sodi clans into

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has been formally demanded, shame prevents her looking at her betrothed. The parents this time do not take the village elders with them, but bring a rupee's worth of *mahua*, as before. The purpose of the visit is to ask the girl's parents if they are now ready to give the girl in marriage, or want to wait another six months or year; if they are poor, they may not have had time to collect enough to meet their share of the cost of the wedding, and this is the only possible justification for further postponement of the wedding. Normally the girl's parents say they are ready, and ask the youth's parents to come for the girl in ten days' time. This visit occurs generally at the end of Phagur or early in Chaita month, because, although marriages may take place at any time of year, they almost always take place in Chaita, when there is no field work and there is plenty of grain in hand from the freshly garnered harvest. Before this visit the amount of the bride-price or *paring*, settled at the previous *talq-da'ina*, should be ready, and the girl's parents signify their readiness to give the girl by asking the youth's parents to bring the bride-price in ten days' time. The amount of the bride-price varies with the means of the youth's family. It consists of a rupee's worth of new cloth for the bride's mother, a gelded pig, one *paili* (four pounds) of salt, one *paili* of ground *ambari* (roselle) flowers, one or two pounds of red chillies, two or three pieces of turmeric, and, according to the means of the bridegroom's family, from one to four *duti* baskets each containing ten *paili* (forty pounds) of husked *kutki*, from eight annas' to three rupees' worth of *mahua* spirit, and from Rs. 5 to Rs. 40 in cash. It is the cash portion of the bride-price that is avoided or reduced by cross-cousin marriage or such arrangements as the marriage of a brother and sister of one family to the sister and brother of another; other items are unaffected; the bride's mother must always get her cloth, and the pig and grain are eaten at the wedding.

On the day appointed for bringing the bride-price the bridegroom stays at home, but his father and mother, taking the bride-price, proceed to the bride's village, accompanied by all their fellow-villagers, and preceded by three or four drummers. The villagers who go with them, men, women, boys and girls, do not expect to be fed entirely at the expense of the bridegroom's parents, and therefore take their own food and drink for the first meal on arrival; it is felt that to be entertained at the expense of the parents would not be helping them, but adding to the financial burden of the wedding.

On arrival, the bridegroom's parents make the bride-price over to the bride's parents, and all the visiting party then cook their food and eat it apart from the bride's parents and co-villagers. After

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585 this supper both parties assemble in front of the bride's house, the men and youths in dancing-dress, and there is dancing and singing till dawn, all men, women, youths and girls present being free to take part, whether married or single, old or young. Soon after dawn the pig, grain and liquor brought by the bridegroom's parents as part of the bride-price are divided into a portion for the bride's village and a portion for the visiting village, cooked and partaken of by all present; any deficiency is made up by the girl's parents, this being their only expense; they do not even decorate their house or put up booths for the guests.

This wedding breakfast over, the bride is brought out by her parents and made over to the bridegroom's parents. She is not washed or given special clothes, though if funds permit she sometimes gets a new loin-cloth. She is expected to weep profusely in token of reluctance to leave her father's home. The bridegroom's parents take her on foot through the forest to their village, arriving always in the evening. The bridegroom stays in his house; to go out to meet the bride would be immodest. She is escorted to his house, thrust inside, and the marriage is thus completed without further ceremony. There is no present from the bridegroom to the bride, not even a ring as among the Bison-horn Marias. Supper that night is cooked for the couple by the bridegroom's mother.

582 177 Pre-puberty marriage never occurs among the Hill Marias, who look upon it as an utterly abhorrent custom of the Kosor or Hindus. Unfortunately a few Bison-horn Marias are beginning to ape their Hindu neighbours in this as in other matters; but even now probably only three in a hundred Bison-horn marriages are child marriages.

Child marriage

583 It is very common for the bridegroom to serve his future father-in-law for his bride instead of paying the bride-price. If at the second *talq-da'ina* his parents have to admit to the girl's parents that they cannot afford the bride-price, it is arranged for the bridegroom to go as *lamana'i* or suitor-servant to the girl's parents for a term of years that varies from three years to seven or eight, though when the term exceeds three years the girl usually becomes the *lamana'i's* wife for the last two years. For the first part of his service the *lamana'i* is not supposed to have intercourse with the girl, but, provided that the girl agrees (and she is seldom reluctant), he generally does so after a time. It is, however, considered a disgrace to her parents if in consequence she becomes pregnant, and they are fined a pig, which is eaten by all their and the *lamana'i's* clansmen, after which the girl is regarded as the *lamana'i's* wife. Often at the end of the agreed period of service the father-in-law is unwilling

Serving for a wife

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585 There is now no obstacle to the wedding. The appointed day may be any auspicious day in the year, chosen in the manner explained in the section on omens; but in practice almost all weddings take place in the early hot weather, as among the Hill Marias. I will first give a general outline of the wedding procedure, and then reproduce, with some revisions, an account of an actual wedding which I saw at Ganjenar and Massenar between Dantewara and Kuakonda in May 1930; the account has already been published in the *Central Provinces Census Report*, 1931.

On the afternoon of the wedding day the bridegroom, his parents and many relatives of both sexes proceed to the girl's father's house with the agreed bride-price. On arrival the bridegroom's father delivers the bride-price to the bride's father, the cloth for her mother being placed on top of one of the large pots of *landa*, and asks him to hand the bride over. In response the [769] bride's father takes up the small pot of *mahua* spirit, and after the usual libation to his Departed in his *narma-lon* room drinks a little spirit and gives the rest to the members of the household. *Landa* is then taken from one of the pots brought as bride-price and from one of those provided by the bride's father, and distributed to all the guests present, both from the bridegroom's and the bride's villages and clans. Meanwhile the bride is bathed at the nearest pool by women relatives, and a bevy of the women of her village and clan keep up a constant chorus of song, to the occasional beating of drums. After the bride's father has entertained all present of both parties to the *suttam-jawa* or relatives' dinner, consisting of grain and the flesh of the pig brought as part of the bride-price, the girl is brought out by her father or brother towards dusk, and handed over to the bridegroom, their hands being joined and rings exchanged. The senior woman relative of the family takes up the cloth brought for the bride's mother, and wraps it round her, while a male member of the family hands the bridegroom's father a hind-leg of the bride-price pig, to be taken to his village to feed the bridegroom and bride and the bridegroom's family. The bridegroom's party then escort the bridegroom and bride with the bride's going-away presents to the bridegroom's village, accompanied by the girl's relatives and fellow-villagers. Special booths are prepared at this village for the bride's relatives. On arrival, the bride and bridegroom are taken into his father's house to the Place of the Departed in his *narma-lon* room and seated there with the father, brothers and mother of the bridegroom; they eat the hind-leg of pork brought from the bride's house after it has been cooked on the Hearth of the Departed. Meanwhile the other guests sit down to pork and rice cooked separately outside the

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An old Bison-horn Maria from Gudra, between Katakalian and Kuakonda

[face p. 234

The pouring of water over the bridegroom and bride at the Bison-horn Maria wedding described at p. 238

[facing p.234]

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585 house, and are given *landa* to drink. At the meal in the Place of the Departed the couple are exhorted by the bridegroom's father to live together in unity and concord, and to be faithful. All night the drums roll and guests pour in to dance and drink *landa* or sing around the bride and bridegroom, the men wearing their bison-horn dancing head-dresses. Ultimately next morning the couple are made to stand on a hurdle under the eaves of the hut constructed for them, and a kinsman of the girl's father climbs on the roof and tips a pot of water over them. The boy then drags the girl into the hut, both pushed by willing hands, and the door is fastened on [353] them and a bamboo-matting curtain hung over it. After a while they emerge, and the bride takes a ceremonial farewell of the girls of her village, and the guests disperse. Finally in the evening she is thrust into the bridal hut by her husband's younger brothers and his friends, her husband being already inside awaiting her.

In the account of the Ganjenar-Massenar wedding which follows, naturally no description can be given of the scenes in the *narma-lon* rooms of the bride's and bridegroom's fathers, to which outsiders are not admitted, or of other parts of the wedding ceremonies which I did not actually see. The bridegroom was the son of Atrami Hunga of Massenar, the younger brother of Atrami Kopa Dhurwa, a very influential headman who was decorated by the late Raja of Bastar for keeping that *pargana* quiet during the 1910 rebellion, and the bride was the daughter of Kunjami Harma, the headman of Ganjenar. When I reached the latter's house, which was about two miles from my camp at Massenar, the bridegroom and his party had arrived, and the relatives' dinner was over. The bride had gone to a tank to be bathed by her elder sister and her brother's wife; the bridegroom and his father were walking about talking to the guests and the bride's male relatives. There were not many persons present, perhaps 150 all told; a few men were beating their dancing drums, but none were wearing their bison-horn head-dresses. Around the door of the separate sleeping hut used [533 by Kunjami Harma's daughters and other womenfolk, some thirty 831 women were standing shoulder to shoulder, swaying to and fro and 195] singing a choral refrain of '*Kokolin-waya*' to obscene verses sung by a laughing woman in the centre of the group. Another band of women hurled abuse at them at intervals, when the leader of each band tried to out-Billingsgate the other.

535 When the bride had been bathed, she emerged from the sleeping 585 hut with a cloth wrapped over her shoulders, and was dragged into a chain of dancing and singing girls with their arms closely linked, while the bridegroom, also with a cloth over his shoulders, was pushed into another chain. These chains of girls circled and

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535 585 gyrated in all directions, at one moment appearing inextricably mixed together, only to disentangle miraculously at the next and weave themselves into fresh spirals and circles, singing abuse at each other. All the while the group of standing girls went on [533] swaying and singing round the door; the leader caused great laughter by improvising a song warning all girls to be on their guard that night, for the Diwan, the Tahsildar and the Circle Inspector were watching them, and who knew what might happen after dark?

583 431 585 Before we arrived the bridegroom's party had presented the bride-price, which consisted of one slaughtered pig, a live pig, five very large pots of *landa*, five *paili* of husked rice, four yards of Mahra cloth for the bride's mother, and one rupee. While the chains of girls were dancing around the bride and bridegroom, her mother's sister came out and displayed the bride's going-away presents, a *masni* or grass sleeping-mat, a small basket containing about a *paili* of husked rice, a large pot of *landa*, and a young bull calf newly weaned.

585 Some men wearing their bison-horn dancing head-dresses and beating their long drums now started to dance near the gyrating chains of girls, and there was a further accompaniment to the singing of bamboo flutes. The two chains of girls suddenly opened out, leaving the bridegroom and bride together, and the girl's father and the bridegroom's elder brother were with them, holding their hands. The old father, Kunjami Harma, held up his hand for silence, and started a long speech, asking the bridegroom's elder brother, 'Have you come willingly for this flower? Will you wear it and cherish it? It is fresh and tender, and will not bear rough handling. Know you how witless women are? If she be a poor housekeeper, pardon her. If she cook badly, pardon her. If she speak to other men, do not take it amiss, but pardon her.' There were other similar injunctions, and to all the bridegroom's brother answered yes. Then Kunjami Harma took his daughter, who took the bridegroom's right hand, and placed on his little finger a ring that she had pulled off the little finger of her own right hand; the bridegroom then took a ring off his own left little finger and placed it on hers; cloths were held over their heads while this exchange was in progress. The bridegroom then took off another ring, which the girl's elder sister received in her outstretched cloth, while she said, 'From now onwards you must neither touch me nor utter my name till I am dead. If you do, all will laugh at you, and your brethren will fine you.' I was told that if she dies before him, he will take a ring off her little finger and wear it on the middle finger of his right hand. He also gave a ring to the bride's younger sister, for he is free to touch her and to talk of her by name. Then his

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elder brother touched the old man's feet, and the old man touched his, and then each placed his hands on the other's shoulders, standing face to face, and leaned his head forward first on the other's right, then on his left shoulder; finally each salaamed the other with both hands held in front of his face, palm to palm, and said '*Juhar!*' Each of them then exchanged similar salutations with all their near relatives present and the leading guests, including myself and the other State officials present.

The girls now started singing again, telling the bride that she must leave them and go to her man, that her lot would be hard, and that if she did not like her man she should make up her mind to leave him. Meanwhile the bridegroom slipped off over the fields to his father's house at Massenar to be ready there to receive the party escorting the bride.

The bridal procession then formed up, led by some thirty women, singing and side-stepping along the narrow jungle path in the gathering darkness. After them walked the elders, then a party of drummers, followed by the bride, pretending to struggle against a cluster of laughing girls pushing her to Massenar. All danced as they went, beating their jangling dancing sticks on the ground in time with the drums and the steps of the dance. It took them two and a half hours to cover the two miles to the bridegroom's father's house in Massenar.

There a multitude of other girls and men received them, the men all in the traditional dancing costume, with a thundering roll of drums, while dozens of bombs of gunpowder and rice chaff were exploded. The full moon beat down on a sea of tossing plumes, or shone back from the glistening bison-horns of the head-dresses, till the whole courtyard was full of rampaging and fantastic movement. The bride and bridegroom were seized by fifty girls, and made to sit in their midst in front of the house where they were later to live, all packed as closely as sardines, swaying to and fro on their hips as they sat, and singing obscene marriage songs in full-throated chorus, while all prodded and plucked at every part of the bodies of the bride and bridegroom, whose heads were muffled in cloths.

After watching this for some time I went off to my tent for dinner, but returned towards midnight. The bride and bridegroom were still where I had left them, surrounded by the swaying and singing girls. Some of these had babies sleeping in their laps as they sang, and many, tired out, were sleeping, hemmed in by their companions. The crowds had swollen, and every forest path was thronged with men and women hastening with drums and dancing kit to join the dance. Some came from villages twenty-five or

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thirty miles away, but showed no sign of fatigue. Around the dance many were lying already drunk, for sixty large pots of *landa* had been provided for the guests. Now and again an excited youth and girl would leave the dance and disappear in the trees. But there must always have been over two thousand men dancing; and those who had been overcome by the *landa* would return to the dance as soon as they had slept off their intoxication.

All night the drumming and dancing went on, though when I returned to the scene at 7.30 a.m. many men were lying asleep or drunk or merely resting, with piled drums and head-dresses. Now many men wearing black gourd masks with thick hair and beards of black bear's fur and carrying thick bamboo sticks, dummy guns and nets, rushed in and out among the dancers, making obscene gestures with their sticks at the dancing and watching girls, to the general merriment. Looking for the bride and bridegroom, I found them, their heads still covered with the same cloths, riding on the shoulders of their sisters' husbands in the middle of a ring formed by a long chain of girls with arms outstretched and hands clasped, who headed off all the efforts of the 'steeds' to break out of the ring with their riders.

The fathers of the couple now decided that the time had come for the final ceremonies; the sun was getting hot, and the *landa* supplies low, for the dancers continued at intervals to leave the dance for a drink and a nap before the maddening beat of the drums called them out once again. A bamboo wicker-work hurdle was placed on the ground in front of the door of the hut where the couple was to spend its married life. To this the bride and bridegroom were led, and when they were standing on it they were at last freed from the cloths in which their heads had been enveloped for the last twelve hours. As they stood there hand in hand, the girl's father's brother climbed on to the eaves of the hut[1] with a large pot of cold and dirty water, and suddenly tipped its contents over the bride and bridegroom, whereupon, amid general laughter, the bridegroom seized the bride, and both rushed into the hut, the door of which was closed and curtained upon them. But they were allowed only ten minutes' privacy 'to discuss what they would do that night', as the bridegroom's old father explained; and even then they cannot have heard each other speak for the din of the drumming and dancing, which had not ceased for a moment even when the water was poured from the roof.

After ten minutes the bride emerged, and was surrounded by the girls of her own village, who in unison sang to her advice on a wife's duties and rights, urging her to return to them if her

[1] This is illustrated in Plate XIX. [See ca1.116, pp. 124-25, -Au]

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husband ill-treated her, while she provided a chorus of simulated wailing. They took her off to the booths prepared for her parents and the guests from her village, and sat there with her for the rest of the morning and all the afternoon, taking their food there, while the rest of the guests finished the *landa* and slowly dispersed, beating their drums, along the forest paths. At about 5.30 p.m. the bridegroom entered the bridal hut alone, while his younger brother went to the booth where the bride had spent the afternoon, cried 'Come, sister-in-law, it is time that you were bedded,' caught her by the hand and tried to drag her off. She screamed and feigned resistance, but he called four or five other laughing youths to help him, and between them they pulled the girl to the door of the bridal hut, opened it and pushed her in, barring the door on the outside. Then they stole a cock from the bridegroom's coop, and, accompanied by the girls who had come with the bride from her village, plucked the cock and scattered its feathers along a path leading to a forest glade, where they cooked and ate it, and all dispersed.

The *ottur* and *ahenchattu* forms of marriage among the Hill Marias have already been mentioned; the same forms exist among the Bison-horn Marias. Actually women are very free to change their attachments or, if unattached, to go to the house of the man of their choice and live with him as his wife even if he is already married. It is convenient for the man to have the services of an extra woman in a society in which so much work is done by women; and it is not considered right for a nubile woman to be unattached. Particularly among the Bison-horn Marias, men with two or three wives are common; only one of these will be a regularly married wife, and the others will be either her younger sisters or parallel-cousins or other women who have come into the husband's keeping of their own choice, or after becoming pregnant as a result of a liaison with him. The expression commonly used by the Bison-horn Marias for a woman going in this way to live with a man is the local and Chhattisgarhi Hindi term *paisa-mundi*, and the unions are known as *paithu* or *odiyattur*; there seems to be no difference between these, just as for practical purposes there is little between the *ottur* and *ahenchattu* forms of the Hill Marias. Where an unmarried woman is made pregnant, and becomes the man's wife by living at his house, the man has to give his fellow-clansmen an entertainment (*paithu*) or dinner, and pay the usual bride-price. Husbands have similarly to give a dinner when unmarried girls, wives or widows, of their own choice and without their guardians' consent, go to live with him; but in such

Irregular marriages, widow marriages and divorce; attitude to abnormalities

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VII

I found it very difficult—and I suspect that Grigson had the same experience—to see Marias in action. Tribes vary greatly in their willingness to allow a visitor to be present at their ceremonial. The Murias used to invite me to marriages or festivals, sending information about them long beforehand. The Saoras are delighted to have visitors at their celebrations and more than once the ghost of a long dead headman has come upon the priest and admonished the people to treat me right. But the Bondos do their utmost to keep the stranger away; during the great summer festival they pile the paths leading to their villages with thorn bushes and not even a fellow Bondo, if he belongs to another village, is admitted. The Marias do not go so far as that, yet I found them singularly unwilling to let me watch them do anything. When I was camping at Borgum I heard that the Wijja Pandum was to be celebrated in two days' time and rather unwisely announced my intention of being present. On the morning of the festival a delegation arrived in camp to say that the proceedings had had to be postponed because the Perma's wife was in her period—though I darkly suspect that the old lady had in fact passed the climacteric. I had to dodge round the country for weeks before I saw a wedding, and to witness the Ghotpal Marhai I had to come sixty miles on an elephant down from the Abujhmar because the dates were changed at the last moment.

But since a page of personal observation is worth a whole chapter of hearsay I will describe the wedding at which I assisted and the great festival at Ghotpal in 1942.

On March 15th, 1942 I was camping in Gogonda at the edge of the hills overlooking the great southern plain. That evening, I was told, two girls were to be taken to Sirsitti, a village some two thousand feet below, to be married. At about five o'clock therefore married and unmarried women collected and began to dance with one of the brides. She had her head and shoulders completely covered with a shawl and wailed loudly all the time. Three pots of rice-beer were distributed to the dancers and a large number of onlookers, and then the dancers took the bride round the village. This was a very pretty sight. The circle of dancers would suddenly elongate into a line and then curl up again in a ring. As they danced from house to house, men and women would come out and put a ring on the bride's finger or a necklace round her neck and embrace her by raising her hands twice to their foreheads and then clasping her in their arms. As they did so, the dancers sang the names of the people who were giving presents and their exact relationship to the bride. At other times they sang how the girl had hitherto been going to and fro freely in the jungle, getting wood, husking grain,

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585 [533] fetching water, but that now she was to go to a life that was both sweet and bitter. Finally, a group of quite little girls arrived on the scene with bundles of food tied up in cloth on their heads and the bride, still weeping loudly, was carried off by her girl companions across the fields into the sunset. It was a moving sight, this taking away of the bride to her new life, but it was noticeable that no member of the bridegroom's family came to fetch her. She was simply taken away by her own people to his village.

Next morning I started before dawn with my assistant Mr. Sampat Singh on the long descent to Sirsitti. The scenery on the way was magnificent. From the brow of the hill we could see stretching away almost to Orissa the great plain of Konta and Sukma with the peaks of hills rising above the mist just touched by the morning sun. When we reached the village we found the two marriages in progress, though everyone was a little jaded having been up dancing all night. There were little camps outside the village for the two brides and the bridegrooms' families sent food and liquor out to them. During the morning there was some desultory dancing in the middle of the village, and a group of girls sat round each bride who wailed loudly from time to time as the girls sang to her about the sorrows and hardships of the married life to which she was now going. Young men from Gogonda, the brides' village, cooked the food supplied by the bridegrooms and this was ready about three o'clock in the afternoon. The visitors assembled beneath a magnificent mango tree outside the village, and the feast was very carefully served by the young men; an exact number of [264] leaf-cups was prepared and each contained the same number of bits of pork; an equal number contained identical portions of rice. The boys then served the cups, first to the women and then to the men. Others went round pouring gravy on the rice and they all ate together. When the meal was over they went to a stream near by and drank, kneeling down and putting their faces right into [271] the water to suck it up.

Then the girls assembled round the first bride, who was still 585 covered with the shawl which all through that sweltering day she had not once laid aside, and danced with her into the centre of the 535 village. Another party escorted the second bride and soon the scene was very lively with two separate dances whirling round the square. Presently the first party danced up to the future husband's house. They gathered in a very tight block before the door and began to sing loudly and rapidly, jerking their bodies to and fro from the hips, a song which meant, 'Come and get her if you can, brother; come and catch her if you can'. For some 585 time the bridegroom stood in a rather embarrassed fashion in the

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doorway while his parents encouraged him and the old women shouted ribald jokes. At last he plucked up courage and made a dash for the girl. Her companions resisted him but at last, of course, he broke through them, seized the girl and dragged her weeping loudly into the house. The girls rushed after them and pushed and hustled them into an inner room and shut the door on them, the theory being that they would consummate the marriage there and then. The old women stood round the hut trying to look inside and discussing the bridegroom's potency. The cock which is often stolen by the bride's party from the bridegroom's house was here given as a present with a little cloth to the bride's younger sister.

This was the end of one marriage. The other was a surprise. The girls came dancing with the shrouded bride up to the house, the bridegroom put on a new shirt for the occasion, his mother brought water to wash the feet of her new daughter-in-law. Everything was ready, but after the girls had danced round once or twice in front of the house, they made as if to go right round it in honour of the Departed. Everybody waited for them to complete the circuit and return, but their voices grew fainter and fainter, and I went out to see them dancing away into the forest. It was then explained to the unfortunate bridegroom that certain ceremonies had to be performed in Gogonda to protect the bride against magical dangers with which she was threatened and that she would be returned to him in three days' time.

It was then six o'clock and we returned to camp.

VIII

On February 2nd, 1942 there was celebrated at Ghotpal near Barsur the great Marhai and Pen-Karsita of the Lekhami clan. Directly I arrived and made my camp under some trees I was greeted by a little deputation of local priests who told me very politely but quite firmly that though they were delighted to have me there I would not be permitted to take any photographs or write anything down. Later I went with Mr. Sampat Singh to the shrine of the Ghotpal clan-god, the Anga, Usendi Pen, with whom are his sons Hunga and Wella and his daughter Wange. I was at once surrounded by people telling me that I must not go inside. An elderly magician approached me and in a stern voice told me to take my hat off, for I was looking at a god. Such instructions are unusual in aboriginal India.

Nothing happened that day, but people began to assemble and many merchants arrived and set up their booths in a line along the edge of the great open dancing-ground in front of the shrine.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 A W32 Gond A W32
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is only a little to be done, the crop is piled round the pole and boys thrash it there: otherwise a bamboo rail is tied to the post and perhaps supported by another on the circumference of the thrashing-floor. A line of men hold on to the rail, sometimes there are two lines on either side, and so they thrash. I have not seen them go round and round in procession, as the Baiga do. 252

A rich man with many fields often employs the chelik to work for him, but it is *polo* (taboo) for the motiari to help in the thrashing. [464]

It is also taboo for women to winnow. A chelik stands on the thrashing-floor and gently shakes the grain from a basket held high above his head: the wind carries the chaff away. Sometimes another man fans the falling grain with a winnowing-fan or big basket and they generally fan the pile of grain to remove any chaff that may have settled on it. [463]

Boys fan bride and bridegroom at a wedding in just the same way after giving them their ceremonial bath. [585]

When the work is complete, the Kada Marenga ceremony is performed, and offerings are made to the Village Mother.

Storing the Grain

The Muria do not make corporate granaries, but especially in the west each large house has a special granary, raised on pillars from the ground. 251

In the house, the dhusir-bin made of paddy rope is often used. A network of siari cords is laid on the ground. On this the Muria coil paddy rope anti-clockwise to about two feet diameter, lay paddy straw on this, pour on grain, wind the rope round, gradually build it up, pour in more grain, pound it down with a husker and tie it. At the top they place a ring of siari cord and slip the ropes through it. Then they beat indentations into the top of the bin and tie the cords along them. This bin is aptly described as the 'boy who binds a cloth tightly round his waist'. 415

Special bins are made for the unthrashed mandia in the *bīri*. Square boxes are made of date-palm leaves tied to a wooden frame and bound round and round with rope, supported by poles above the ground. The bin is filled with the mandia and closed with grass at the top. Sometimes the walls are of matting.

The New Eating Ceremonies

Before there can be any general use either of crops or the various forms of jungle produce, there must be the appropriate Korta Tindana, or First Eating ceremony, a sort of Harvest Thanksgiving in honour of the earth which has given the crop. The ceremonies at all these are alike, except for the different fruits or grains that form the bulk of the feast; I describe a typical Marka Pandum at Maoora in Chapter VII, and need do no more here than give a list of the chief festivals. 796

Irpu Pandum (February-March). The ceremonial gathering of the first fruits of the mahua tree, and a feast at which some of them are eaten.

Marka Pandum (March). A ceremonial feast of the first mangoes and any other wild fruit that may be ready, such as tendu, char or karmata.

Kurum Pandum (August). The first eating of the small grains and millets.

Korta or *Puna Pandum* (September). The first eating of the new rice, together with gourds and cucumbers.

Jata Pandum (December-January). Often called Pupal Pandum, the first eating of pulses and beans, and use of sesamum and castor oil.

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●585

Ceremonial greeti of the bridegroom his relations

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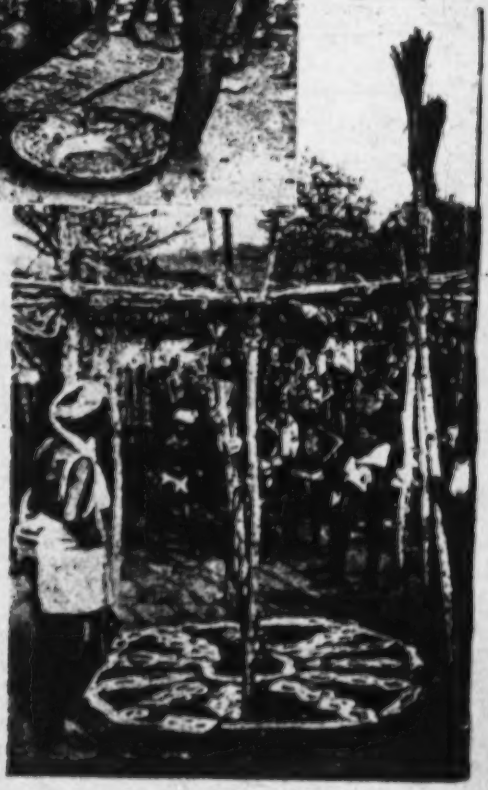

Plate XXII

Marriage booth

[P. 82 (B)]

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
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Bride at Amasara with braided hair

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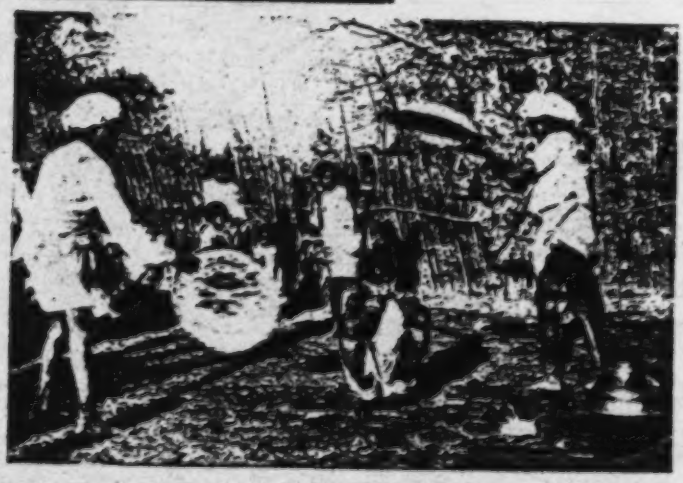
The bride's bath

Plate XXIV

Chelik fan the bride dry after her bath



[p. 94 (B)]

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THE MURIA AND THEIR GHOTUL

III. Six Kinds of Marriage

583 As in other parts of aboriginal India, the Muria recognize several different types of marriage, which for convenience I will give in tabular form.

●585 (i) *Ostasāna marmi* (Halbi, *sopni bihao*). This is the traditional Gond marriage; the parents, after anointing the girl with haldi, send her to the bridegroom's house where the Lagir is performed.

(ii) *Talh dayna* (Halbi, *chal bihao*). This is the Hinduized modification of the Gond marriage and is performed partly in the bride's and partly in the bridegroom's house. The Lagir is held outside the bride's house. It is known as Chat-marmi in Betul and is only performed when the contracting parties have quarrelled.[1]

(iii) *Arwitāna* (Halbi, *udaliya*[2]). This is the marriage of a chelik and motiari who elope to a friend's house and have the rites there without the approval of their parents. The full ceremonies may be performed, but the bridegroom has to pay for them himself.

(iv) *Haiwark wāt* (Halbi, *paisa mundi* or *paitu*). Here a girl runs away from her parents' house and forces marriage on a boy of her choice. She arrives, sits down and refuses to go away.

[587] (v) *Tika tasāna* (Halbi, *haldi-pāni bihao*). This is the simple and inexpensive ritual performed either for a widow or widower who remarries, for the marriage of divorced persons or for an adulterous marriage.

(vi) *Yer dosāna marmi* (Halbi, *bhul bihao*). This is the hurried marriage when a motiari is found to be pregnant. If the boy to whom she is engaged is willing to marry her in spite of this and is willing to accept the child as his own, it is called a *bhul bihao*. If the marriage is with the boy who caused the pregnancy it is simply a *yer dosāna* or 'pouring-water marriage'.[3]

585 I will describe in very considerable detail the first two types of marriage. The others may be disposed of more expeditiously.

The *Arwitāna* marriage is often performed with the full rites, though naturally somewhat modified by the absence of the parents, and the fact that the bride and bridegroom are attended by chelik and motiari of another ghotul.

The *Haiwark wāt* marriage is celebrated when a girl leaves her home and forces herself upon her lover. When the boy asks her what she wants, she says she has come for *paisa mundi*. If the boy is willing, and sometimes even if he is not very enthusiastic about it, the marriage is performed as soon as possible. That very evening the chelik and motiari assemble and build a simple booth with only five pillars. Bride and bridegroom sit in this and the Gaita places rapidly-made crowns on their heads, and puts haldi and oil on their bodies. The village people do tika and the chelik and motiari take bride and bridegroom seven times round the booth and someone pours water and haldi over them.

587 The *Tika tasāna* marriage is simple and inexpensive. It often has to be, for in the case of adultery, elopement or a marriage after divorce, the new

[1] Trench, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 80.
[2] Russell says this means 'Love in the fields'—Russell and Hiralal, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 468.
[3] To these forms of marriage many parallels may be found in other Indian tribes as well as in traditional Hinduism.

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bridegroom has to pay up the expenses of the original marriage and sometimes compensation to the original husband as well as a fine to the panchayat. 587
The ceremony is performed inside the house, bride and bridegroom sitting together. The bridegroom puts a cloth on a wooden seat, pours liquor on it and hands it to his bride. She rolls up mango leaves into little *kinwa* and puts them in her ears. There is no dancing, no anointing with haldi, no going round the booth. Visitors place a tika mark of dry rice without the usual oil or haldi.

The Gaita sprinkles the new cloth of the bride with liquor and gives a little sermon: 'O Mahapurub, this man's house has been broken; this woman's house is broken. These two have we elders yoked. O Mahapurub, give them all they need to eat and drink. Let them have sons and daughters. For all their visitors let there be enough.'

Then the newly married pair touch the feet of the village elders who bless them saying, 'Go brother and sister, live well and eat well; may you have children; when we come to visit you, give us a little water. May Mahapurub care for you.'

When a widow is remarried there is the same ceremony, and almost the same words are used except that instead of the reference to the broken houses, the elders speak of the loss of the husband. Should a widow be marrying an unmarried boy—as might easily happen if the girl had been married young—the boy is anointed with haldi and oil, but she is not.

The *dewar* or husband's younger brother has first claim upon a widow and if she marries anybody else, her husband has to compensate him. In some places, there is a formality by which a woman can avoid the reproach of widowhood without actually getting married. In Banjora, for example, she need not put on bangles; if she puts *kinwa* of mango leaves in her ears in the name of her *dewar* or her grandson, she is no longer a widow'. At Bopna, when Gagra's father died, his widow put what are called *hât kinwa* in her ears. As they described the incident to us, 'she said to herself, "Since there is an Anga in our house no one will eat from my hands now I am a widow. I will put *kinwa* in my ears and bangles on my wrists in the name of my *dewar*; if I don't, my relations will fine me and even men of my own house won't eat with me." So thinking, she went to a bazaar, and on her way home she picked a couple of mango leaves, rolled them up and put them in her ears in the name of the bazaar. After that she was no longer regarded as a widow.'

Sometimes old women put these *kinwa* in their ears in the name of their grandsons. 'If there is no husband for you, marry your grandson.' In Gudla, Lakmu's father's brother's mother put *kinwa* for Lakmu. It is generally said that a grandmother can put these ornaments in the name of her own son's own son, that is, her real, and not merely her classificatory, grandson.

Finally, we have the sad and furtive ceremony that is performed when a notiari has the misfortune to conceive. A booth with only five pillars is 585
erected, relations apply haldi to both bride and bridegroom, but the leaf-crown is put only on the bridegroom's head. He has to go alone round the booth for the Lagir ceremony accompanied by a man carrying the marriage palsa-pot, which represents his wife. They then sit together and tika is made with rice mixed with haldi and oil. A pregnant girl may never go round the booth for the Lagir ceremony.

Irregular marriages, obviously, can be celebrated at any time of the year; but regular marriages are performed only in the hot weather (March to May).

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
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IV. The Marriage Ceremonies

585 I will now describe in detail the actual procedure of a Muria marriage. This rather tedious task is, I fear, inevitable, for during a wedding the chelik and motiari are on the stage nearly all the time and are rarely seen to better advantage. But to give a coherent account of these marriages is not easy, for—as among the Gond of the Central Provinces—customs vary from village to village and from year to year. Aboriginal marriage procedure seems specially sensitive to outside influence. As we have seen, in northern Bastar the Muria are subject to the influence first of the Abujhmar Maria, then of the Gond of Chanda, Chhattisgarh and Orissa and finally of Hindu traders and officials. In the Chota Dongar, Mardapal and Chalka Pargana I found marriage customs vague and uncertain; I got the impression of people playing a part that was new to them, performing ceremonies that were not theirs by long tradition. This is probably because these people are really Maria who have come to settle in the plains—and the Maria have practically no marriage ceremonial at all. The payment of a bride-price, feasting and dancing in the bride's house, the taking home of the bride and closeting her with her husband: such is the simple formula of a marriage in the Abujhmar Hills.

As we move north and east, however, we find more and more complexity and precision in the marriage ceremony. In the Jhorian, Amabera and other northern parganas of Narayanpur, the influence of the Chhattisgarh Gond is clearly seen; marriages are usually held in the house of the bridegroom, the marriage-booth is built inside the compound, and many of the customs remind me of what I have seen in Mandla and elsewhere.

In the north and east of the Kondagaon Tahsil, Hindu elements are prominent—the use of haldi, the marriage-booth, the sevenfold circumambulation, and many minor details. The most notable difference in custom is that the main ceremony is held in the bride's house. This is the Hindu custom, but it is also that of many Uraon, the Baiga and (most significantly) the Hill Maria. There is some reason to suppose that the Gond practice is not really primitive but, like so many other customs, grew out of some actual incident that was interpreted as revealing the will of the gods.[1]

But even where the ceremony is modified, there is an attempt at a compromise with normal Gond custom. The groom's booth is made *outside* the bride's house, and he has a separate camp. Bride and groom are anointed with haldi in their own separate houses. The climax of the ceremony is at the groom's booth, and the concluding rites in his house.

But where the marriage is held in the groom's house, the booth is made *inside*, and both bride and groom are anointed together.

I must therefore inflict on the reader two accounts: the first is of the marriage of Dhuti and Nohori which I attended at Sidhawand in the north-east of the State from 3 March 1941, where the ceremony was held at the bride's house, supplementing it with observations of two marriages which I saw at Malakot in April of the same year. The latter was a double cross-cousin

[1] Russell and Hiralal suggest that 'the custom of holding the wedding in the bridegroom's house is a survival of the custom of marriage by capture, when the bride was carried off from her own house to the bridegroom's, and any ceremony which was requisite was necessarily held at the house of the latter. But the Gonds say that since Dulha Deo, the bridegroom god and one of the commonest village deities, was carried off by a tiger on his way to his wedding, it was decided that in future the bride must go to the bridegroom to be married in order to obviate the recurrence of such a calamity'.—Russell and Hiralal, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 73. Crooke refers to a version of the legend wherein the bridegroom was killed by lightning.—W. Crooke, *The Popular Religion and Folklore of Northern India* (Westminster, 1896), Vol. I, p. 119.

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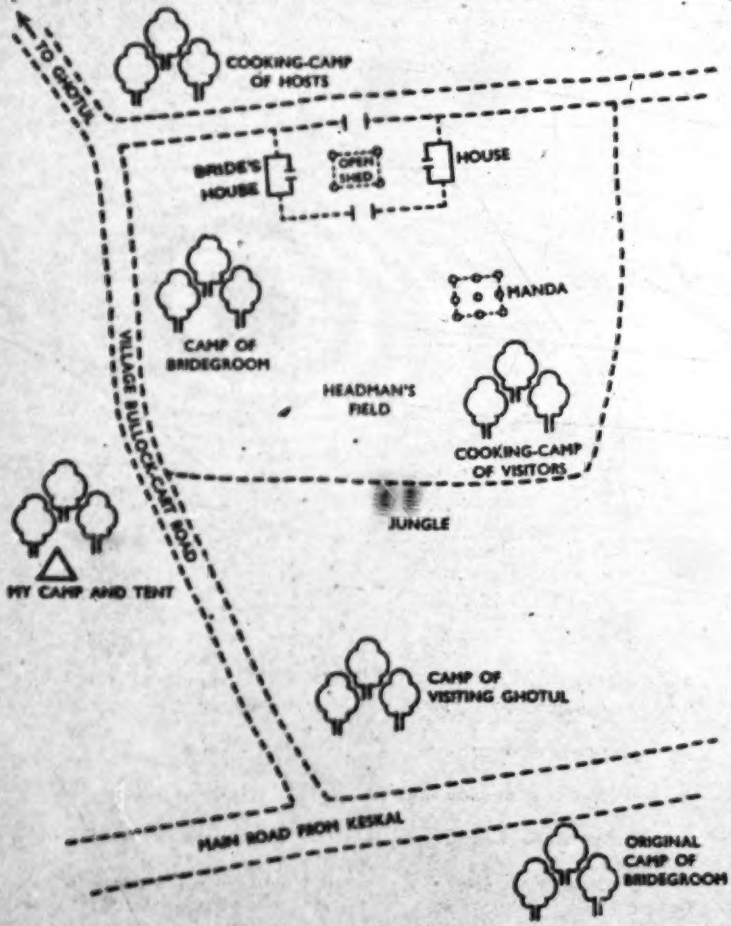
marriage; a Naitami girl and boy of Malakot married a Poyami boy and girl of Parsipadar by exchange. The second account describes the marriage of Karanga of Nayanar and Waddai of Amasara which began on 15 April 1941, and was held in the bridegroom's house. There were three marriages in succession at this time, and I also have notes of similar ceremonies in Telenga, Atargaon, Naria and Esalnar. In both accounts I emphasize, though I do not exaggerate, the part played by the chelik and motiari.

THE SIDHAWAND MARRIAGE

In Sidhawand lives my *sakhi*, Pilsai; and his uncle the headman of the village (a Maravi) sent me a very warm invitation to be present at the marriage



Plan of the Sidhawand Marriage

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
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585 of his daughter to a Poyami boy from Eitkonar. On 3 March 1941, therefore, I made my camp in the village, and was greeted with great affection.

Preparations for the Marriage

585 533 For a whole week before the marriage, there had been energetic preparations both in the ghotul and the home. In the ghotul the chelik and motiari gathered round the bride and sang songs about her future joys and sorrows. So important is this training of the bride that even where the girls do not normally sleep in the ghotul, the rule is relaxed for these few days.

The songs describe the joys of ghotul life and the girl's stern and sorrowful experiences under a stepmother's rule. Here is a fairly lengthy song on this familiar theme. After each line the refrain *Rerela rerela rela rerela* is repeated several times. Each line ends with the exclamation *Roy helo, O sister!* and is itself repeated twice.

Song

Rerela rerela rela rerela

585 539

Niya ra mandāna loni roy helo,	This used to be your home,
Loni gājur hindu roy helo,	How clamorous your talk here,
Loni re hinja podār roy helo.	But now the house is silent.
Niya re nāru gali roy helo,	Yours was the village path,
Koliyāl tokār harri helo,	The path was like a fox's tail,
Bera re arrān gāti roy helo,	You used to go at sunset,
Dāwāng kaide heti roy helo,	In your left hand a winnowing-fan,
Tināng kaide kesur roy helo,	In your right hand a broom,
Ghotu de heya hardi roy helo,	You went to clean the ghotul,
Jaliyāl mal lekka roy helo.	Like a peacock strutting.
Amka na miyār indur roy helo.	We said, 'There goes so-and-so's daughter'.
Ghotu de gājur hindu roy helo,	In the ghotul was a lot of noise,
Kīle re koru racha roy helo,	The court was long and broad,
Niya ra jor tor layor roy helo,	You had a boy lover,
Jodire ondoy kīti roy helo,	But you are leaving him lonely,
Sangi re jor tor layor roy helo,	You had a boy lover,
Sangi re tasi dāki roy helo,	You are going away leaving him behind,
Dinda re rāj le mandi roy helo,	You were living in the kingdom of the unmarried,
Adere rājo puto roy helo,	You will never enter it again,
Buto re kabār punwin roy helo,	You don't know what toil there is ahead,
Sagāre sidun punwin roy helo,	You don't know what relatives can be like,
Halon ne wāton ne punwin roy helo,	You don't know what visitors will come,
Kosure koytune punwin roy helo,	You don't know what officials will come,
Ideke sudi wāyar roy helo,	But soon you will know it all,
Ideke bara pundaki roy helo.	Soon you will discover what married life is like.

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Rerela rerela rela rerela

They remind the motiari of her former lovers:

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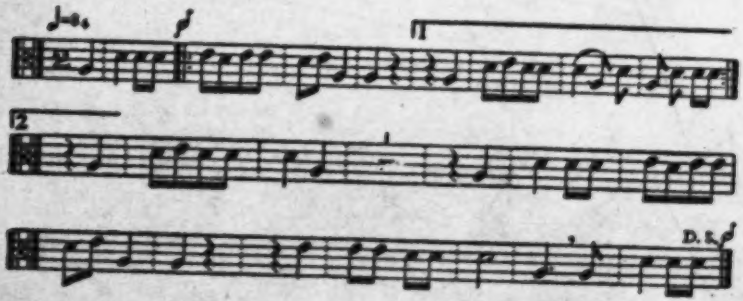
Niya jorta layor helo adere,	He was your yoke-fellow,
Kotal jori layor helo adere,	He was your lover,
Ore layor hunjdi helo adere,	You used to sleep with him,
Narka dhuinga talkindi helo adere,	At night he craved tobacco,[1]
Dhuinga hila indur helo adere.	You said you had none.
Adere dhuinga ãyo helo adere.	But that was not his real desire.
Hewon injor witindi helo adere.	You denied him and tried to run away.
Layon tasi dãki helo adere.	But now forever you are leaving him.

They also remind the bridegroom (if he is in the same ghotul) of what he too is going to lose.

How good it would have been had the Raja stayed, O Rani!
He would have been lord of this kingdom;
We would have served him as his servants;
We would have brought our ploughs for his field;
We would have carried his loads without charge.
We would have been given rice as our wages.
We would have carried home his bundles of rice.
We would have brought them from the fields, lifting up our loads.
We would have taken them to the Raja, and he would have paid us our wages, O Rani!

This song is specially appropriate to one of the leaders of the ghotul: other songs have a more general application.



[533]

Dindorãjo jorãjo nona.	The kingdom of the free, lad.
Ida rãjo puto nona.	You'll never see it more, lad.
Niya wãyna ghotul nona.	You came to the ghotul, lad.
Parmãkoro ghotul nona.	Fair as bison-horns, lad.
Ida ghotul de wandir nona.	You used to come here always, lad.
Dãwa haide gibi nona.	A sleeping-mat in the left hand, lad.
Tina haide burga nona.	In the right hand a stick, lad.

[1] To ask for tobacco is the conventional way of inviting a girl to sexual congress.

[833]

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 A W32 Gond A W32
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585 539 During the day, material preparations keep the family busy and excited. Rice must be husked and cleaned, pulses prepared; the men must arrange for liquor, the women for oil and haldi. As they grind the haldi the women sing:

Māyo balum jamudi.	O Jamidarin mother, we call on you.
Kākor ghare niy utra,.	Don't go elsewhere, O mother,
Maniya daniya ghare je.	But come to Maniya Daniya's house.
Tuke newta pārila,	We invite you here,
Dandik bale yiha se,	Come for a little while,
Haldi pura dihāse.	Let there be full measure of haldi and flour.
Asa māyo asa je.	Do not betray our faith in you.
Māyo balum bangāvām.	O mother Bangaram!
Tuke newta pārila.	We invite you also.
Kākor ghare newta je?	Whose is this invitation?
Maniya daniya ghare je.	It is to Maniya Daniya's house.
Haldi pura dihāse.	May there be full measure of haldi and flour.

And so on, endlessly, through a score of deities. Maniya Daniya simply means 'so-and-so' and is altered to the actual name of the householder in each case.

The Bridegroom's Farewell Dance

585 Shortly after my arrival, a roll of drums heralded the approach of the bridegroom, attended by a party of chelik and motiari, who made a temporary camp under a mango tree outside the boundary of the village. This night they cooked for themselves, but three of them came on deputation to the headman to ask for assistants to help with water and cooking. Later, the bridegroom's party began to dance, led by the boy himself; it was his farewell and final dance as an unmarried man.

The Preparation of the Bride

At about nine in the evening, the elders of the village assembled outside the headman's house for a preliminary drink, and two hours later the chelik and motiari gathered in the same place. The elders had now gone away, and the boys made a big fire, and brought out the bride. The girl, who had been Belosa, was covered with a cloth and made to sit in the lap of the Tiloka, her own sister, and was supported on either side by the Sirdar and Kandki. [152] She began to weep loudly and mournfully: she was in good voice, for she had been practising in the ghotul every day for the past week. Today she must continue to cry all night. The boys and girls sang to drown the painful noise, to instruct her in her new duties and themselves to mourn the loss of their Belosa. All night they continued weeping, singing, sometimes dancing, though unlike the bridegroom the bride had no heart for this. From time to time they took a little liquor. It was a moving sight, for the girl's sorrow was genuine, as well it might be—she was leaving a world of freedom and romance for the unfamiliarity of a strange house. The ghotul children also felt the departure of one of their number very deeply; they had lived with her for years; as Belosa she had been the lover of the boys and controlled the destiny of the girls.

585 533 The sequence of the songs was fascinating; with Pilsai's help I was able to get a lot of it down. It was sung in a mixture of Gondi, Halbi and Chhattisgarhi.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
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Motiari attending the bridegroom at Nayanar

[p.102 (A)]

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Plate XXVI

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Motiari carrying the crowned bride groom at Sidhawand

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Bridegroom sitting in the lap of an attendant

[p. 102 (B)]

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The Bride's Song

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539 The bride wept:

Father, my own father, come to me,
For I am going away to a stranger's house.
Had I been a boy you would have brought a daughter
To your own house.
But as I am a girl you send me away.
Had I been a boy, my wife and I would have stayed with you and made you happy.
But I must go away, and we both are sad.

Mother, my own mother, come to me.
Yesterday I was husking rice in your house;
I was sweeping the floor, fetching water from the well,
Cooking food for you, plucking leaves for cups and plates.
But now I go away to a stranger's house, and who will care for you?
How lovingly you looked after me!
But in this new house shall I find joy or sorrow?
When you come to see me shall I be able to give you so much as a cup of gruel?
From today my games, my fun, my seeing you will end.

Now the bride addressed the head of the ghotul.

O Sirdar, when you came to the ghotul and found it dirty
With ashes and dust and no one had swept it,
You called for me and asked me whose fault it was.
The Kotwar and Kandki defended me,
But you said, We are not Maria that we should sleep in dirt,
And so you fined us.
Now I am going away and whom will you have to fine?
Daily I cleaned the ghotul,
But now who will clean it?
With you I used to play and dance,
But now my feet are bound, and I shall not meet you even in my dreams.
Who knows whether I shall find joy or sorrow in this stranger's house.
Sometimes I combed your hair and laughing rubbed your arms,
But sometimes I was tired and slept.
Then you all said, Why don't you comb our hair,
And massage our limbs today?
You must have been to someone, why don't you come to us today?
For this you punished us, turning us out, and saying,
Never come more to the ghotul.
But I brought you liquor and with folded hands
Begged you to let us in again.
Now even in my dreams I may not massage you,
And who will there be to comfort you?

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
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Then she addressed every girl in turn, repeating the same formula to their different ghotul titles.

O Dulosa, Tiloka, Alosa, Jhankai!
I used to bid you sweep and clean, go here and there,
Comb this boy's hair, rub that boy's limbs.
Sometimes you forgot your duty and I abused you.
I went with you for the Diwali and the Hulki dance.
With you I played all kinds of games.
Now who will go to dance or play with you?
Who will teach you our ghotul ways?
While I was with you I taught you everything,
But now I go to a strange house,
And I cannot teach you even in my dreams.

Then the chelik replied,

Only yesterday you came to our ghotul to press our hands and arms,
But now who will comfort us?
Only yesterday you made us happy with your talk and laughter,
But now who will comfort us?
We used to trouble you in every way,
Yet you always gave us comfort.
If you didn't come to the ghotul for two days, we used to ask in the village where you were.
Sometimes they said you had gone away or had fallen ill.
Then when you came at last and we asked you what you had been doing,
You replied 'I went to such and such a village' or 'I was ill and so I couldn't come'.
But when we knew that you had not gone anywhere,
When we heard that you were not ill, but had been to sleep in some rascal's house,
When we knew that you had deserted us for that worthless fellow,
We had to punish you.
But now you will never be punished again,
For you are going away to a husband's house.
Never in your life will you be punished again like that.

Only yesterday we told you to fill our leaf-pipes, to fetch us leaves, to sweep the ghotul rooms,
But now you will never do that again.
We shall look at you from far away and whisper, There goes Belosabai.
No more can you go with us or sit with us.

But live happily there as you lived with us.
Love your husband and comfort him as you loved and comforted us.
Roll his leaf-pipe for him, fetch him leaves and water,
Clean his house, comb his hair, massage his arms and back.
But leave your games and loves and laughter.
Your games and loves and laughter now are for your husband.

And the motiari sang weeping:

Give food and water to your husband's parents.
Don't quarrel with them, don't annoy them, hark to what they say
So you will be happy; if not, your life is ruined.
Live happily with your husband's younger brothers and sisters.

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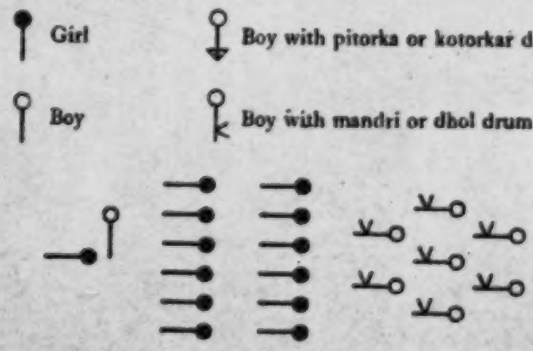
Pick leaves for them, fetch water, bring them wood, and clean their house.
Yesterday you laughed and played with us; tomorrow laugh and play with them.
Yesterday you went with us for water to the well; tomorrow go with them.
If a stranger comes to your new house, content him with water for his feet and a cup of gruel.
When we come, show that you remember us, and give us what we need.
You used to teach us everything, how to make necklaces with beads,
How to massage and how to please the chelik;
But who will teach us now?
When you troubled us, you were our defence;
But who will defend us now?
We will never forget you, without you our ghotul is empty and deserted.

585 In this wonderful exchange of tenderness and remembrance the whole of ghotul life becomes real and vivid. Almost every line might have a footnote referring to some chapter of this book.

After a long night of this, everyone was a little subdued, and nothing happened next day till about 3 p.m. when the bride's party of chelik and motiari went out with their drums to meet the bridegroom.

The Welcome of the Bridegroom

The boys led the way with their drums, followed by a double line of girls, clashing their cymbals, singing loudly. They advanced three paces, halted,



retired two paces, and then advanced again. At the same time the bridegroom's party advanced from their camp in similar formation, bringing the boy with them. As they went along, the girls sang a Gondi song with the refrain *Riri loyo ririla riri loyo virila rila.*

Sindi ãhi mowuri buba,	There's a crown of palm leaves, father, 585
Nana mowur herka buba,	I will wear that crown, father, 539
Bubãu lãr ne herka,	Wear it to please my father.
Sãtu jãr dãdãlor buba,	I have seven brothers, father,
Dãdãu lãr ne herka buba.	For love of them I'll wear it, father.

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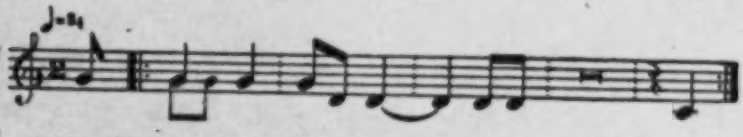
The Meeting of the Parents

585 Just inside the village the parties met—the girls greeted each other, and the elders sat down on the ground for *pārin-bhet* or *samdhi-bhet*, an important little rite which emphasizes that marriage is more than a union of two individuals; it is an alliance of families. A cloth was spread on the ground, and the father of the bride and the father of the bridegroom—the two samdhi—sat down together to talk for a few minutes. The Gaita drew lines of rice-flour and turmeric on the ground, and exclaimed, 'Let tomorrow's work be rooted deep and the tree grow large!' When they got up someone threw a pot of haldi-water over them and there was a lot of ribald laughter.

In Esalnar, the samdhi sat down with a pot of water and cleaned their teeth, exchanging the twigs and saying, 'Let there be no quarrels, let all be well, let there be many children. As the root is below and branches above, so may we be united'.

During this little ceremony the motiari sing various songs, of which the following (in Chhattisgarhi) is an example:

[533]



[539]

Milo milo milo samdhi kukur pila sang milo!	Meet, meet, meet, samdhi, meet with a puppy!
Kukur pila la kāy karbo? Lejo tumor pila.	What should I do with a puppy? Take away your baby.
Milo milo milo samdhi hāthi pila sang milo!	Meet, meet, meet, samdhi, meet with a baby elephant!
Hāthi pila la kāy karbo? Lejo tumor pila.	What should I do with a baby elephant? Take away your baby.
Milo milo milo samdhi burkāl pila sang milo!	Meet, meet, meet, samdhi, meet with a tiger cub!
Burkāl pila la kāy karbo? Lejo tumor pila.	What should I do with a tiger cub? Take away your baby.
Milo milo milo samdhi gini pila sang milo!	Meet, meet, meet, samdhi, meet with a sucking pig!
Gini pila la kāy karbo? Lejo tumor pila.	What should I do with a sucking pig? Take away your baby.

The bride's motiari went forward; one of them picked up the boy on her back, and they led him in this formation to his camp on one side of the headman's field.

Here was a small leaf-hut under a shady tree. Men and women of both parties greeted the bridegroom. They washed his feet and put a rice-mark on his forehead. Then they led him into the hut and made him sit on a new mat.

The Giving of the Ring

The scene now shifts to the bride's house. Presents of cloth were given to the bride's mother. As it had not been done at the engagement-time, the ring-cowrie, in its modern form of four annas, was given to the bride's father and put in the Pot of the Departed to compensate the ancestors for

Plate XXVII

585 Pouring oil down an arrow on to the head of the bride

Preparing the bride's seat underneath a curtain

[p 106 a]

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
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●585 the loss of the girl from their clan. This is a very important and significant ceremony. It represents the passage of the girl from her original clan into that of her husband, and indicates that she will henceforth be numbered with his ancestors.

The bridegroom was carried over from his camp. A new mat was spread, and the samdhi sat down. A little rice was put on their knees. The bride sat in the lap of her father-in-law, the bridegroom in the lap of his. Motiari covered the girl's hand with oil. The Gaita put a ring on the boy's little finger. The boy then seized his bride and tried to transfer the ring to her. But her hand was oily and slippery, and there was a long struggle—which caused great amusement—before he was victorious. Then the girl hit him with her clenched fist and jumped up. He tried to hit her back, but a group of her chelik dashed forward and covered her escape.

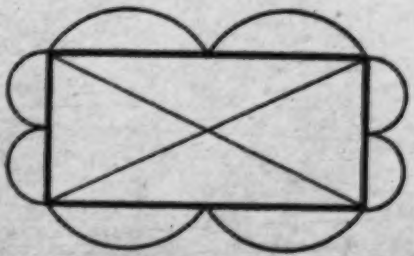
All the time the motiari stood by singing loudly:

[539]

Muda muda intoni dāda!	He is saying ring, ring, brother!
Sondr pekoh āyerom dāda,	Were I a goldsmith's daughter, brother,
Son muda hewerom dāda,	He would give me a golden ring, brother,
Dinda layorātek roy dāda,	Were he an unmarried boy, brother,
Kuddum dāka wāteni dāda.	He would come running to me, brother.
Kaide muda niya ro dāda.	The ring is in your hand, brother.
Pila hāra āteke roy dāda,	Were he a man with children, brother,
Pila odoh hemu roy dāda.	He would bring them to stay with me, brother.

The Crowning of the Bridegroom

The bridegroom was now carried back to his camp, where the Gaita made a *ghari*-pattern[1] on the ground like this. The boy sat in the lap of his elder brother's wife. Old women, mother's and father's sisters, covered his head with the ends of their saris. The Gaita came with an elaborate crown made by Pannara from date-palm leaves. The leaves in the crowns are carefully counted: if the number in each is uneven, all will be well, but if the bride's number is even it means that the marriage will be a failure. This is the Neyi Maur or Oil Crown which will be worn throughout the preliminaries of the marriage, and then exchanged for the Lagir Maur at its crisis. The Gaita and the boy handed it to and fro seven times. The Gaita held it up, exhibited it left and right and with a sudden movement pushed it over the boy's face, while the whole party shouted in



[1] These patterns, which are also made in the marriage booth, are akin to the 'threshold designs' common throughout India. Their purpose is, I think, definitely 'witch-baffling'. Cf. *Folk-Lore*, Vol. XLVIII, p. 268 and XLIX, p. 181.

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585 triumph. He dropped a little oil over the boy's head and shoulders, and applied haldi to his body with mango leaves. He was followed by everyone present.

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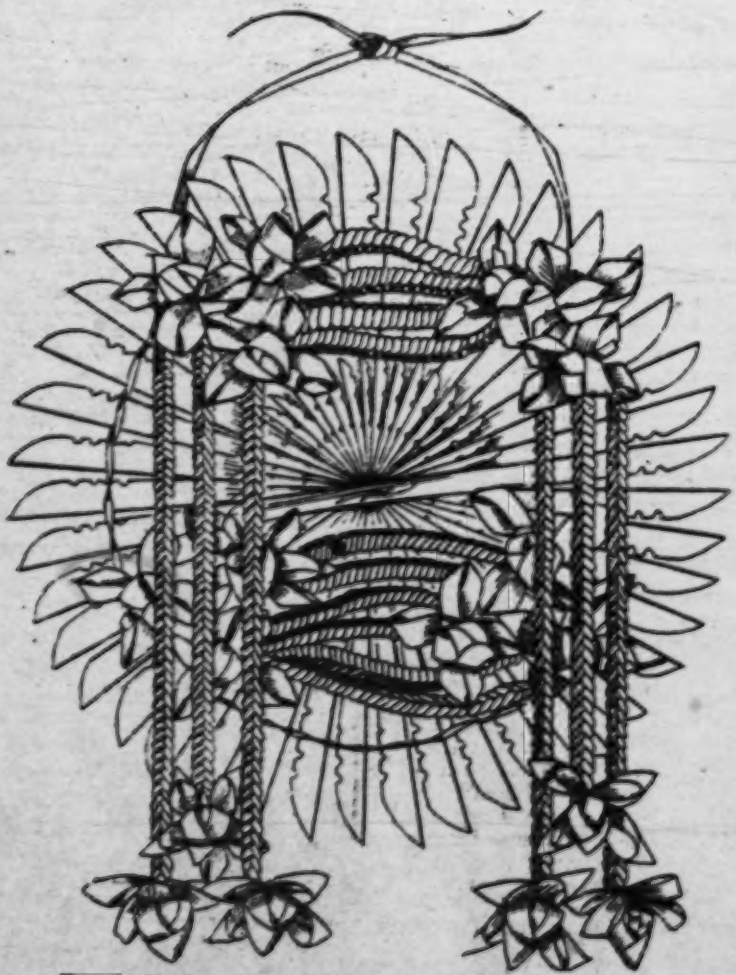

Fig. 18. Marriage crown for the bridegroom made of date-palm leaves
Breadth 1'

Meanwhile, the motiari sang songs about the date-palm, from whose leaves the crowns are made.

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Chhind pān ke mauṛ dai,	Of palm leaves is the crown, mother.
Main mauṛ bāndhe dai?	May I wear the crown, mother?
Kāy mola debe bābu?	What will you give me, son?
Gaibri ke rupiya dai,	I'll give you a bundle of money, mother,
Kotha ke baila dai,	I'll give you a bullock in the stall, mother,
Wahi baila debe bābu.	Give me that bullock, son.

Here is a rather charming little song, which was recorded at Palari.

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Bāri hate chhind hate ruti ruti kande	The palm grows near the fence and cries all night.
Na kānd re chhind hate bābu mauṛ pinde,	Don't cry, O palm, my son will wear you as a crown,
Bāndo le bāndo pujāri chatuk mauṛ bāndo.	Tie O tie it, priest, carefully tie the crown.

Bringing in the Mandā Wood

585

Now the chelik of Sidhawand, assisted by visiting chelik from other villages, went out with the Gaita to fetch wood for the marriage-booth. The Gaita cut a small mahua tree with a single blow of his axe, and the boys cut the other poles and leafy branches of serai wood. Presently the party returned, drumming, dancing and singing, with loud shouts of *Puda* (vagina).[1] It was now nearly sunset. The boys piled the wood in the place where they were going to build the booth, and danced round it holding each other's hands. The nāṭiāri came and picked up the mahua tree. They stood in a bunch very close together, everyone held the tree and banged it up and down, singing vigorously.

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While the wood was being brought in the girls sang taunt-songs at the boys, most of them obscene. The first, for example, has the refrain *Kavad hāyding barha sulling farbatuk chete nor layer*, 'The chelik's testicles are like the fruit of a dried-up tree and the root of a gourd; his penis is like a snake'.

[1] Risley describes a festival of Dharti Mai among the Mal Paharia. 'The dancing party shout continually *bar, bar* (*pudendum muliebre*), a mode of invocation believed to be especially acceptable to the goddess. In this somewhat indelicate cry we may perhaps see a barbarous and undisguised reference to the *vis genetrix naturae* so prominent in many early forms of belief.'—H. H. Risley, *The Tribes and Castes of Bengal* (Calcutta, 1891). Vol. II, p. 71.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
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Layor taile mānda ri sango;	The boys are bringing the boughs on their heads;
Maksi manda tator ri sango.	Secretly they have brought the wood.
Buching poyndh kāhtor ri sango.	They have cut it bit by bit.
Māke marsi hewer ri sango,	If they would give us axes,
Chhak ne manda kaderāt sango.	We'd cut the wood with a single blow,
Mamāt manda tawerāt sango.	And we would bring the wood in.

In the next song, the boys sing the first three lines and the girls answer.

Mando deri kokoti wāhoti soy bai.	The pole of the booth is crooked, girl.
Tumcho rati chepoti roy soy bai.	Your vagina is like a chapati, girl.
Jhelun dānka netu roy soy bai.	We will dance jumping up and down, girl.
Tumcho asan ra'u roy soy dāda.	If we were to do it instead of you, brother.
Jhelun dānka netu roy soy dāda.	We would dance jumping up and down, brother.
Gāra phāndun netu roy soy dāda.	We would yoke the cart and take it away, brother,
Kukra bāsti netu roy soy dāda.	At cock-crow we would take it away, brother.
Kānde tangia dhartu roy soy dāda.	We'd put axes on your shoulders, brother.
Bāchun deri mārtun roy soy dāda.	We'd bring a straight pole, brother.
Kokta bākta deri roy soy dāda.	We'd never cut a crooked pole, brother.

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There are other songs which I need not quote, in which there is much play about crooked wood and the crooked penis, and the penis which can dig well in intercourse but cannot dig a hole for the pillar of the booth.

The boys had hidden a pice somewhere in the wood, and the girls spent a long time looking for it. Finally, about 7-30 p.m., the Gaita put some rice on the spot where the motiari had danced with the mahua tree, and dug a hole with his iron digging-stick. If white-ants or stones are found there, they move to another spot, offering an egg and chicken to whatever god the Siraha decides was responsible for the ill omen. But all was well today. The Gaita broke a coconut on his digging-stick, and the chelik planted the centre-pole of the booth and the mahua tree in the hole that the Gaita had made. After drinking a little liquor, the chelik then proceeded to make the booth (*manda*).

This was a very simple affair. Nine sarai poles were placed in a rough square, in the middle of which was the centre-pole and the mahua tree.[1] On the centre-pole a small representation of the vagina is often carved. A roof

[1] A number of tribes put the mahua in the marriage-booth. The Omanaito do (Thurston, op. cit., Vol. V, p. 444), so do the Birjhia (Russell and Hiralal, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 339), the Sonkar of Chhattisgarh (*ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 316), and the Bunjva or Bhinya (Dalton, op. cit., p. 148). Mock marriages to the tree are performed by the Bagdi, the Kurmi, the Mahili and no doubt others (*Census of India, 1911. Report for Bengal, Bihar and Orissa*, pp. 322ff). The Gond of Mandla put a mango tree in the centre of the booth, but elsewhere use a post made of mahua wood (Ward, op. cit., p. 138).

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
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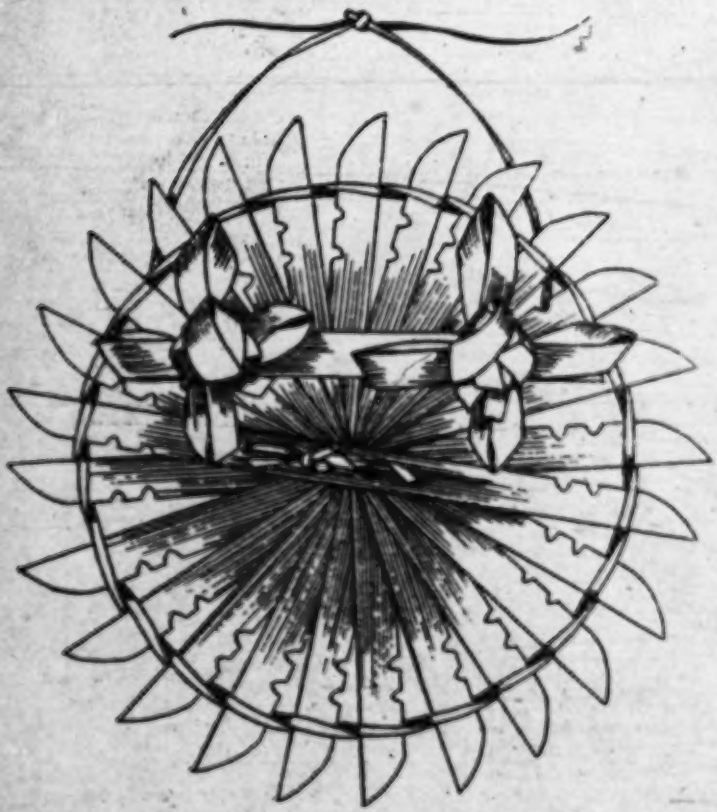
was made by tying poles round the square and criss-cross over it. This was again covered with leafy branches. Round the poles was tied a haldi-coloured string, or sometimes simply a rope of paddy-chaff, and a string of mango leaves. This string is called *torun* (Halbi) and is mentioned in another *manda* song. This has the refrain *Riri loyo ririlo ririlo riri loyo ririlo*, and is addressed apparently to the village mother. 585



[292]

FIG. 19. Marriage crown for bride
Bronzed 6"

Rilo hunnilr gehina dai,
Sukhun dukhun baha wo dai.
Gachar machar dyma rey dai?
Kinjla tosle dyo wo dai?

Haryar mawta yatiwo dai.
Tdrill tawar lawar wo dai.

O Mother of this young boy,
Reveal his happiness and sorrow.
Why do you stay silent, Mother?
Because nothing has been promised you?
Take our offerings willingly.
He has no brothers, Mother.

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Awa bābo lewor wo dai.
Wenayise torun wo dai.
Mardi marra manda wo dai;
Layān parle bona wo dai.
Marka āki torun wo dai.
Bākiya nima bāwi wo dai?
Bābuna jiwa werriyta wo dai.

He has no father or mother.
But here is a goat for the *torun*.
The pole is from the saja tree;
Young girls made the platform.
Of mango leaves is the *torun*.
Why do you not answer, Mother?
The boy's soul is frightened, Mother.

Tying of the Beni-plaits

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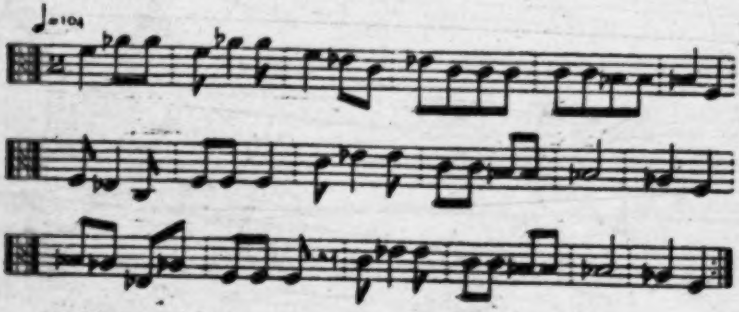
After this, the motiari carried the bride back to her house and her motiari and others anointed her with haldi. Then in both camps motiari busied themselves with tying the hair of their charges into two long and five little plaits. Other motiari stood round singing a song with the refrain,

Riri loyo. Ririlo rilo riri loyo ririlo riri loyo ririlo rilo rilo riri loyo ririlo.



Sura beri sakāli bābu.
Baden suda pāiki bābu?
Atin miyār manta roy dai.

Tāna suda pāiha dai,
Niya jor tā ayo roy bābu,
Helār bhāi bīti roy bābu,
Saga saina biti roy bābu,
Awa bābo biti roy bābu.
Awa bābona lewon roy bābu.
Tārāl tamor lewon roy bābu.

The plait is a sevenfold chain, boy.
Whose plait will you tie, boy?
I'll tie the plait of my *māma*'s daughter, mother.
For her I will tie the plait, mother,
She's no fit mate for you, boy,
She has sisters and brothers, boy,
She has relations, boy,
She has father and mother, boy.
You have no father or mother, boy.
You have no brothers, boy.

This is a very common sentiment in the marriage songs. The bridegroom is an orphan, alone in the world, useless, ugly, unfit to mate with a bride so richly dowered with wealth and relatives. I add two other very short songs:

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I

Sur beni beni roy āya,
Main beni pārenda āya,
Pārole pāro tuy pāro nona

O the links of the plait, mother,
I want to tie the plait, mother,
If you wish, boy, you may tie it.

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2

Sāt bahin kanya buba!	O the seven Kanya sisters!
Kanya dhari bazāla buba.	Holding your waist they sit.
Sāt bhātti phuli nā buba	O the seven-times distilled liquor
Buba indāna buba na	Father, say, father.

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THE THIRD DAY

Bathing Bride and Bridegroom

Shortly after dawn the bride's motiari brought out the bridegroom and danced with him. Then they bathed him in front of his camp, making him sit on a wooden seat, while two chelik fanned him vigorously with large baskets. When this was finished he jumped from his seat into one of these baskets and the bride's motiari picked him up and carried him, swinging him vigorously, back to his camp. They left him with loud cries of *Sota* (penis). Then the bridegroom's motiari bathed the bride.

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Songs

1

Riri loyo rilo rilo riri loyo ri ri lo rilo ri riloyo ri ri lo

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Māwa bābu na yeru ra sangori;	The water's for our boy;
Sono jhar jhar yeru ra.	Like a stream of gold is the water.
Niya nunin yeru ra;	The water's for your girl;
Koda urkul yeru ra.	Like horse-stale is the water.
Niya bābuna yeru ra;	The water's for your boy;
Neyu urkul yeru ra.	Like a dog's urine is the water.
Māwa nunina yeru ra;	The water's for our girl;
Sono jhar jhar yeru ra sangori.	Like a stream of gold is the water.

2

Dulhi na āng dhoila chelik sundar pāni,	Bathing the bride's body with chelik-beautiful water,
Paniya paniya bolis re nona.	You were begging for a comb, a comb.
Abe paniya pāwaliz re nona.	Now you have got your comb.
Sai shanwār sātum roy nona.	It's the Saturday bazaar today.
Sātum dauru kindi roy nona.	You were going to the bazaar.
Dulhi na āng dhoila chelik sundar pāni.	But you are bathing the bride's body with chelik-beautiful water.

Digging the Manda Earth

I missed seeing this at Sidhawand, but witnessed it at Malakot. Some older women, carrying baskets covered with cloth, led a small procession of singing and dancing motiari and drummers to the house of the village cowherd (Kopa or Rawat). They danced for a time before the house, asking the Kopa's wife to come out.

Song

Kope le kope le pasia kope pasia roy.	Kopa girl, Kopa girl, come outside.
Kope le kope le tuka toriy toriy roy?	Kopa girl, Kopa girl, have you some earth?

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Kope le kope le uduh toriy himu roy.	Kopa girl, Kopa girl, give us a little.
Kope le kope le sānde toriy himu roy.	Kopa girl, Kopa girl, give the earth quickly.
Kope le kope le bāti jora hiti roy?	Kopa girl, Kopa girl, what are you doing?
Kope le kope le tada kope tada roy.	Kopa girl, Kopa girl, quickly get up.
Kope le kope le kopāl ondah hitor roy?	Kopa girl, Kopa girl, is the cowherd enjoying you?
Kope le kope l. girda mate mādyoy roy?	Kopa girl, Kopa girl, haven't you finished?
Kope le kope le girda tāye husker roy?	Kopa girl, Kopa girl, are you still sleeping?

585 Presently the woman appeared carrying a digging-stick and was greeted with derisive shouts. She led them to the spot where the cattle rested at midday. There she sprinkled water and cow-dung and prepared a little patch of ground. The Gaita offered rice, egg-shell and haldi, and took the digging-stick in his hand. This was also held by the Kopa's wife and the bridegroom's mother. All three together dug up a little earth, put it into a basket and covered it with cloth. Suddenly one of the motiari picked up the basket and ran as hard as she could towards the *manda*. The chelik chased her; they had to catch her before she reached it. They were just in time; they took one of her rings, and then allowed her to put the earth by the mahua tree under the booth.

Plastering the Manda Platform

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Then some old women, singing very fast, began to plaster with this special mud a little platform in the middle of the booth. They made patterns of rice-flour, plastered them in, and finally smoothed it all over.

Song

Boula parila layer panwira honda buking.	The boys don't know how to make the platform.
Nāgal chotong tallenjo.	The penis is like a ploughshare.
Māha boula parri hanen re.	The boys won't let us make the platform.
Sir hanna layer parri ron.	If they did, how beautifully we'd make it.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
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Some of the mud was left and the old women smeared it on any man they could find. I saw one of them creep up behind the Gaita and blindfold him with her muddy hands, shouting *Pude dārango* or Vagina liquor! At that they all sat down and had a drink. Refreshed by this, the Gaita and an assistant drew an elaborate pattern on the freshly-plastered platform, and put earthen lamps at its four corners. The rice-flour and haldi for this was ground by the Gaita with his own hands.

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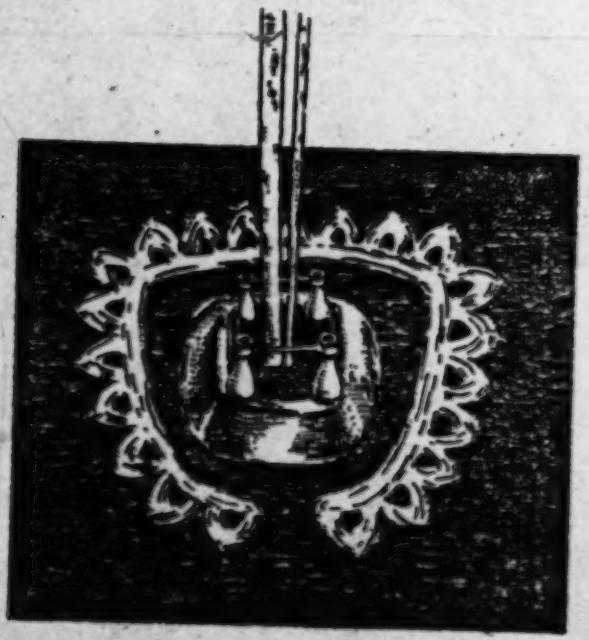

FIG. 20. Mandap platform with typical decoration, from Tylenga

Songs

1

Alar alar singāri dosi,
Nahna singār hersīye dosi.
Kike mimi khuheru dosi,
Kānher tike khingīla dosi.
Kotanj aman kimu yo dosi,
Korri kufi singāri dosi.

Make varied patterns, Dosi,
The best patterns you know.
The fish has come from Kanker,
The pattern faces Kanker,
Make the corners square,
Make a cock's-foot pattern, Dosi.

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2

Hardi pakhua hardi pakhua dosi.
Khālo kaniyu khālo kaniyāla dosi.
Upar kaniyu upar kaniyāla dosi.
Jan bisarbe jan bisarbe dosi.

Apply the haldi, Dosi.
Below for the Kanyang, Dosi.
Above for the Kanyang, Dosi.
Do not forget, Dosi.

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Hāna duma la hāna duma la dosi.	Put it for the Departed, Dosi.
Māta māuli la māta māuli la dosi.	For Mata Maoli, Dosi.
Jan bisarbe jan bisarbe dosi.	Do not forget, Dosi.
Tore dharam jo tore dharam jo dosi.	It is your duty, Dosi.

Further Anointing of the Bridegroom

585 Now his own motiari carried the bridegroom out again and brought him to the *manda*. They danced round the booth, one of them carrying him on her back, till they were tired. Then they made him sit on a motiari's lap on a bamboo fan to the west of the booth and outside it, and put a fan between his hands which he held folded before his face. Again they put haldi, making it 'climb' up his body. The bride's brother's wife came and wept loudly, saying, 'Never forget us and the love we've had for you. Come and see us often. Don't trouble our poor girl. She is ignorant and foolish, but you will be able to teach her. Let her come and see us often'.

This tedious and exasperating ritual continues during the whole ceremony. Every relative in turn must perform it over and over again.

Songs

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1

Dāda indān he dāda!	Cry brother, brother!
Dharmu telu chaga wo dāda.	Anoint with holy oil, brother.
Tuke dharam lāge de dāda.	This is your gift, brother.
Bai indān he bai!	Cry sister, sister!
Dharam telu chaga wo bai.	Anoint with holy oil, sister.
Tuke dharam lāge de bai.	This is your gift, sister.

And so on, interminably, through the entire table of affinity.

2

Tiloke telo telo wo dai!	O the oil of til, mother!
Mola re telu chada wo dai.	Let me rub the oil, mother.
Tola re telu charāten wo beta,	I would rub you with oil, son,
Mora re buta kamey jo beta.	But I have work to do, son.
Sagore din ke buta wo dai,	You can work every day, mother,
Yeke re din ke tele wo dai.	But this oil is just for today, mother.
Tore re buta rahe wo dai.	Leave your work, mother.
Mola re telu chada wo dai.	And rub me with oil, mother.

3

[831]

Kis howe howe layon eh he.	The chelik is a little monkey.
Kene porro targa howe eh he!	Climb up, O little monkey!
Gokāle dudo howe eh he!	Her breasts will fill your fists!
Kene dor raiya howe eh he!	Come down again, O little monkey!
Rāpāle pudo howe eh he.	Her vagina is big as a spade, O little monkey!

4

This song is from Bayanar village, a Paskana Pata for the anointing. The refrain imitates the noise of a goat in heat.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

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Sai le le bo bo bo! Sai le le bo bo bo!

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O young darling, whence have you come,
Have you come for the play of love,
With an ox-goad under the mango tree?
Why have you come, big-breasted love?
I will catch you and enjoy you.
Saikobai, why have you come?
Your pubic hairs are like a shrub in Amgaon.
We were yoked together in the ghotul.
Now you are going, and I bid you farewell.
Now you are leaving the ever-thrilling ghotul.
I took you under the pipal tree and shook you to and fro.
By the ant-hill I tumbled you.
Your ghotul lover has come for you,
But no longer are you there to welcome him.

Taking the Omens

585
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Now the final omens must be taken. The Gaita placed an earthen pot full of water on the verandah of the headman's house, and dropped grains of rice two by two into it. For a successful marriage the grains must meet tip to tip. If they meet crosswise, there will be quarrels; if they both sink, the married pair will die together in a year; if they do not meet at all, the girl will elope with someone else. On this occasion, the two grains sank to the bottom, and the headman sent round an inquiry whether any of the near relatives of the bride had just begun to menstruate—a calamity which had previously been known to disturb the omens. At about the same time the bridegroom fell into a trance, twitching, shivering, stretching himself and then falling inert to the ground. Apparently none of the women were in the tabooed condition and the bridegroom's mother—a managing woman with an enormous bun of hair on the top of her head which caused some to regard her as an incarnation of the Hindu god Mahadeo—thought quite obviously that it was I with my camera who was causing all the trouble, but did not like to say so. After a time, however, when the Gaita had made some extravagant promises to the gods, the boy recovered and the rice grains floated round and hit each other most properly tip to tip.

Filling the Kalsa

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The little kalsa-pitcher, which is to be placed by the mahua tree in the marriage-booth, must be filled with rice. The motiari put a basket before the bride. They place the pot inside and fill the bride's hands with rice, covering them with a cloth. Several of them catch hold of her hands and move them up and down above the kalsa, singing *Rolo*, until all the rice has fallen into the pot. When the pot is full the motiari stand up with a loud cry of *Sata!* (penis).

Songs

I

Nendi hata dotola burka bhillo lotola.
Kâko jillo lotako dulhi lo lotola.

The reeds grow by the river, where the old bear lies.
With whom is he lying? He's lying with the bride.

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Kai pila holi bhālu pila hole.
Whose was the child? It was a bear's child.

Kāke buba balede dulha ke buba balede.
Whom will he call father? The bridegroom.

Kāke āya balede dulhi ke āya balede.
Whom will he call mother? The bride.

Kai rāg men gāge de hur hur balede.
To what tune will she weep? *Hur hur.*

Ama pān chiro chāro.
The mango leaf sounds *chiro charo.*

Dulha cholli kira paro ach.
There are maggots in the bridegroom's penis

Mande pude kurri.
Loudly cry 'Vagina'.

2

Goti roy dodon banjāra aya!
O the Banjara's bullock, mother!

Noni bona roy sudha dāki noni?
With whom will you go, girl?

Māma na marri mantor go āya.
There is my *māma's* son, mother.

Noni miya jori pobe roy noni.
He's not fit to be your mate, girl.

Ona roy sudha hanma roy noni.
Do not go with him, girl.

Gere mara jori roy ade jori pibo.
He is as bad as a pair of gere trees.

Ona re suda hanon roya āya.
I will not go with him, mother.

Aich mande pude kaudi bandhla.
Under the booth is a vagina tied with a cowrie.

Dudhe handi bhursa.
And breasts like a brown pot.

Leka cho cholli bhursa!
O the penis of the brown boy!

Ama pān siro sāro.
The mango leaves sound *siro sāro.*

Leki cho pudi kira paro kurri.
The girl's vagina is full of maggots.

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[531]
Before the kalsa-pitcher is put in its place by the central pillar of the booth, it is decorated, sometimes beautifully and with great elaboration. Red, yellow and black grain is stuck with cow-dung in varied patterns, or stars and lines of dots are made in white and black. While two of the older women are doing this, the motiari stand by and sing.

Song

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Riri loyo ri ri lo rilo ri ri loyo ri ri lo ri ri lo ri ri loyo ri ri lo

Ursa wenjing harza wo dai.
The pot is decorated with rice, mother.

Nana harza kotikān dai.
I place a mark on the pot, mother.

Bāti wenjing kotikin bābu?
With what kind of rice will you decorate it, boy?

Hinga wenji kotikān dai.
I will use *hinga* rice, mother.

Bona suda kotikin bābu?
With whom will you decorate it, boy?

Atin miyār manta roy dai.
With my *māmi's* daughter, mother.

Tāna suda kotikān dai.
I will decorate the pot for her, mother.

Tāna suda parwin roy bābu.
You won't be able to do it for her, boy.

Tāna jorti āywi roy bābu.
She is no fit mate for you, boy.

Tāral tamor biti roy bābu.
She has brothers, boy.

Halār bhai biti roy bābu.
She has sisters and brothers, boy.

Awa bābo biti roy bābu.
She has a mother and father, boy.

Nāhun arik wāla wo dai.
But I am willing, mother.

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When the kalsa-pitcher is ready, decorated and filled with grain, it is taken out to the booth and placed by the central pillar. 585 539

Song

Hi dewani ri ri loyo ri ri lo ri ri loyo ri ri lo ri ri lo

Ona ri bona ri harsa dai?	Whose is this pitcher, mother?
Jāti poyami pohāna jāti nuni.	It's for a Poyami boy, daughter.
Onāyisa harsa nuni.	This pitcher is for him, daughter.
Karsa malka māta dai!	How the pitcher glitters, mother!
Karsa kuri dāha dai.	I am going to look at it, mother.
Niya bārang sādu nuni?	Why does it please you, daughter?
Yarri miyā tāndi nuni.	It is a pot for bathing, daughter.
Tāndi gala orvy nuni.	The pot is not broken, daughter.
Modi asko kāri nuni.	The cord has been cut with this arrow, daughter.
Kāri gala māyoya nuni.	The arrow is not lost, daughter.
Loni kāra manar dai.	The Lamhada boy is in the house, mother.
Turra khoda kanar dai.	He has gone to hunt wild animals, mother.
Molol khoda kanar dai.	He has gone to hunt the hare, mother.
Māo khoda kanar dai.	He has gone to hunt the sambhar, mother.
Asko kāri māyuār dai.	Then the arrow will be lost, mother.
Barsa pure mālona dai.	I am grown up now, mother.
Nākan arik māta dai.	I am very happy, mother.
Hawwa lona tāoon dai.	I cannot rest till I go away with him, mother.

In this song, mother and daughter look ahead beyond the marriage to the girl's first child. The kalsa-pitcher becomes the pot of warm water heated daily by the husband for the young mother's bath; the arrow down which the anointing oil is poured becomes the arrow by which the child's umbilical cord is cut. The young husband has gone on a ceremonial hunt—and by his success or failure they will know the number of their children.

From time to time a couple of girls came to clean the *manda*: as they did so, the others stood round singing. *Re re loyo re re la rala rala re re loyo re rala.*

Dulha kahan gaio beloss?	Where has the bridegroom gone, Beloss?
Wahin kuhār galoss beloss.	He has carried off his sister.
Kai dāra asaisa beloss?	What branches has he spread?
Pharsa dāra asaisa beloss.	He has made a bed of pharsa branches.
Kai pila kaka re beloss?	What child has she borne?
Bhallu pila kaka re beloss;	It is a bear cub;
Hur hur hare re beloss;	It cries *hur hur*;
Chilluk kalo khade se re beloss.	It runs to bite you, Beloss.

THE MURIA AND THEIR GHOTUL

The Midday Dance

585 539 Then the chelik gathered round the booth and began to dance, holding each other's hands swinging backwards and forwards to a rather dismal tune, as they circled slowly round.

Songs

1

Tāra wo dai nāwa sono pungāri.	Give me my golden flower, mother.
Nāwa iga to hile nuni niya bubān nigādu.	I haven't got it, your father has it, son.
Tāra wo buba nāwa sono pungāri.	Give me my golden flower, father.
Nāwa iga to hile nuni niya dādān igādu.	I haven't got it, your brother has it, son.
Tāra wo dāda nāwa sono pungāri.	Give me my golden flower, brother.

—and so on, taking the names of every relative present.

2

Walāldāti koliyāl walālta?	Where are you going, fox, where are you going?
Chilhodāl wayāl hilu jo tāna toka tun hepur pandhal.	Make a broom of a squirrel's tail.
Walāldāti nirāl wālālta?	Where are you going, leopard, where are you going?
Chilhodāl wayāl tāna tālla tun kudwo pandardr.	Make a measure of the head of a rat.

585 It was now midday and the visiting motiari brought food to the booth as reward for the boys who had gone to fetch the wood the previous day. The boys sat down in a wide circle round the booth and the girls served them with rice and vegetables on leaf-plates. When they had finished the chelik got up and down three times shouting 'Penis!', and so dispersed.

When darkness fell everyone went home for the evening meal. The headman provided pork for his visitors: the pig was knocked over the head with a rice-pounder and the Gaita offered the carcass mahua-spirit saying, 'Let there be enough flesh for us all and some left over'.

Throughout the night there was singing and dancing; every now and then the weary bride and groom were brought out to be anointed, from the feet upwards to the head.

[533 831] The company drank, and made merry with feecennine songs, for 'there is no purdah in a house of marriage'. Much of the dancing during the night and a large part of the day was done without drums in almost Hill Maria style. Boys, or boys and girls, held hands and moved slowly round the marriage-booth in a wide circle. The singing was monotonous, but the songs themselves are often more interesting than those concerned merely with details of the ritual.

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Songs

1

Aliyāro maliyāro kanhi ruha joji !	The gruel is made of bits of rice, Aliyaro Maliyaro!
Aliyāro maliyāro sānda joji kisnu !	Give us the gruel quickly, Aliyaro Maliyaro!
Aliyārsingh maliyārsingh nimār mahe dāhit ?	Where are you going, Aliyarsingh Maliyarsingh?
Aliyāro maliyāro pārewāu pila jori !	We are like a pair of pigeons, Aliyaro Maliyaro!
Aliyāro maliyāro jori parhi dāha !	We are off to search for wives, Aliyaro Maliyaro!
Aliyārsingh maliyārsingh mātir bhumi dāha ?	What country are you going to, Aliyarsingh Maliyarsingh?
Aliyāro maliyāro lānjir bhumi dāha !	We are going to Lanji Land, Aliyaro Maliyaro!

2

Charota mara buha charota mara darwai rey !	O the shade of the charota tree, father!
Wārāna darbār buha darbār naki rey ?	What is this durbar, O father?

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Kosa re kohkana nuni kosa re kohkana doyon roy!
O the silken horns of the bullock, daughter!

Tāne re mola nuni tāne re mola kindan roy!
I have named a price for this bullock, daughter!

Nākune nāreh buba nākune nāreh hema roy.
Do not deceive me, father.

Nākune mola buba nākune mola kindan roy.
You are selling me, father.

Kile re khapra buba kile re khapra rupia roy,
A rupee is worthless as a broken bit of earthenware,

Rupia re jiwa buba rupia re jiwa kiti roy.
Yet you love rupees, father.

Koda re urkul buba koda re urkul dārango roy,
Liquor is worthless as a horse's stale,

Dārango re jiwa buba dārango re jiwa kiti roy,
Yet you love liquor, father,

Miyāne jiwa buba miyāne jiwa kewi roy.
And you do not care for me.

3

Nikān lewāl nuni wātor roy guguti guguti.
They have come to take you away, my girl.

Wātir bhum tor dai wātor roy?
Where have they come from, mother?

Chhattisgarh tor nuni wātor roy.
They have come from Chhattisgarh, my girl.

Wātir wātir dai kamiāl roy?
What work do they do there, mother?

Jāti kawdo nuni kamiāl roy.
They are of the Kawdo clan, daughter.

One ise dai hemāt roy;
Don't give me to them, mother;

Kodo usi dai paron roy;
I cannot husk the kodon, mother;

Karwul māti dai danda roy;
My arms are like tundri roots, mother;

Danda gala dai nindo roy!
My arms are not yet grown, mother!

One ise dai hemāt roy.
Don't give me to them, mother.

4

Koh bodāl bodāl kopa le;
I have a horned bison, Kopa;

Nāwa bodāl mai: kopa le.
My bison is lost, Kopa.

Hāle māri māri gaita le,
On the hill of sal trees, Gaita,

Akey toru osi gaita le.
I had taken it to graze there, Gaita.

Sono tāye guta kopa le.
I had a golden tethering peg, Kopa.

Guta inja poitu kopa le.
Now the peg stands solitary, Kopa.

Hira tāye dāmir kopa le.
The tethering-cord was made of diamonds, Kopa.

Dāmir himu poitu kopa le.
Now the cord is lonely, Kopa.

Dāmir himu poitu kopa le.
Now the cord is lonely, Kopa.

5

Bharewān bharewān kaida nana pairi karena;
I will wear the Bharewa's anklets;

Kālu re kālu re rumjum rumjum pairi karena.
The anklets tinkle *rumjum rumjum*.

Kochiyāna kochiyāna kaida nana churi karena!
I will wear the Kochiya's bangles;

Kaida re kaida re rumjum rumjum churi karena.
The bangles tinkle *rumjum rumjum*.

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Setina setina kaida nana getil kuhena;
I will wear cloth from a merchant's shop;
Nani re nani re rumjum rumjum getil kuhena.
When I wear that cloth, my waist goes *rumjum rumjum.*
Sonārān sonārān kaida nana suta karena;
I will wear a goldsmith's neck-band;
Todara re todara re rumjum rumjum suta karena.
The neck-band sounds *rumjum rumjum.*
Sonārān sonārān kaida nana dāru karena,
I will wear a goldsmith's ear-ring,
Kaiwu re kaiwu re rumjum rumjum dāru karena.
The ear-rings sound *rumjum rumjum.*
Kaserān kaserān kaida nana chura karena,
I will wear the Kaser's bangles,
Kālu re kālu re rumjum rumjum chura karena.
The bangles tinkle *rumjum rumjum.*

6

[534]

Nāwa tehendor turil roy ange,
My *tehendor*[1] is lost,
Baga ise turil roy bābu?
Where was it lost?
Jamka jumur manda roy ange,
It was lost among the crowds beneath the booth,
Agāy ise turil roy ange.
It is lost there.
Niya sang nor layor roy bābu,
Your friend the chelik
Niya layor bara oyor roy bābu,
Has taken everything,
Or ise oyor roy ange,
But he did not take that away,
Niya sang nāng layāh roy bābu!
O your friend the motiari
Ore bāra oyong roy bābu.
Must have taken it away.

7

Bera lopa bārang kelo le nuni?
O what is in the field, girl?
Jhumjhum āyana nuni kanki tulawa.
The girl is cleaning pieces of rice, *jhumjhum.*
Bera lopa tarāy kelo le?
What is in the field, sister?
Tarai lopa wārang kelo le.
The tank is in the field, sister.
Tarai lopa durpa kelo le?
What is in the tank, sister?
Durpa morede wārang kelo le.
The lotus-root is in the tank, sister.
Durpa morede kanjal kelo le?
What is under the lotus-root, sister?
Kanjal rosela wāyena kelo le.
Under the lotus-root there is a mouse, sister.
Wāyen ayo wāyena dāda le?
Will you come to catch the mouse, sister?
Nāhe dai rāngār dāda le.
I would love to come but I cannot, brother:
Niya dai matek kelo le.
Mother would be angry with me, brother.
Jhāpit sandra hitona kelo le.
I have given cloth from the basket, sister.
Hilek icho waiha dāda le.
If you have given it, brother, then I will come.

[1] Iron Jew's-harp.

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8

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Hare nāru ursima hese maryum
parcha bīti nāru heso maryum!
Mardumshumāri nāru roy maryum!

Kosur koytor wāynur heso maryum.

Khatiya lāwo indānur heso maryum.
Khatiya inda punwi heso.
Katul inda puton heso.
Chānwal lāwo indānur heso;
Chānwal inda punwi heso;
Nukāng inda puton heso.
Dāl lāwo indānur heso;
Dāl inda punwi heso,
Dāring inda puton heso.
Namak lāwo indānur heso;
Namak inda punwi heso,
Hawor inda puton heso.
Haldi lāwo indānur heso;
Haldi inda punwi heso,
Kamka inda puton heso.
Ghee lāwo indānur heso;
Ghee inda punwi heso,
Neyi inda puton heso.
Pyāj lāwo indānur heso;
Pyāj inda punwi heso,
Gondri inda puton heso.

Don't build your house near the road, cousin!
There will be nothing but receipt-books and Census forms, cousin!
There the peons and their porters will come.
They will say, 'Bring us a bed'.
We don't know what a bed is.
All we know is a cot.
They will say, 'Bring us rice';
We don't know what rice is;
We only know paddy.
They will say, 'Bring us lentils';
We don't know what lentils are,
We only know pulse.
They will say, 'Bring us ground salt';
We don't know what ground salt is,
We only know rock salt.
They will say, 'Bring us turmeric';
We don't know what turmeric is,
We only know haldi.
They will say, 'Bring us ghee';
We don't know what ghee is,
We only know oil.
They will say, 'Bring us onions';
We don't know what onions are,
We only know garlic.

585 In this song, the words for the different things supposed to be demanded by the visiting officials are given both in the village and the more sophisticated dialects. A *khatiya* is demanded: the villagers only know of a *katul*. The visitor asks, in his own language, for *chanwal*, rice: but the villagers use the Gondi word *nukāng*; and so on.

The Arrow Ceremony

Now came the final anointing with haldi, the 'bringing down' of the oil from head to foot in contrast to the previous 'climbing', when it was applied from foot to head. The bridegroom was brought to the west of the booth and sat on the lap of one of his motiari. He held his hands above his head and an arrow was placed in them. The Gaita first, and then all his relatives, poured oil down it and it spread thence over his body. The same ceremony was performed for the girl, but inside the house.

Songs

585 539

1

Kudār kolāng dākāng māwor.

Neha dākāng wātma māwor.
Keri gābo mundul;
Mendul gala nindoye.
Ali āki mcha;
Moha gala nindoye.

Our boy's stride is long as the handle of a hoe.
Don't stride along too quickly, boy.
Our boy's body is a plantain fruit;
His body is not yet ripe.
His face is a pipal leaf;
His face is not yet ripe.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
Muria

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Berel āki chhāti;	His chest is a banyan leaf;
Chhāti gala nindoye.	His chest too is not yet ripe.
Kāreka hāya tala;	His head is a kadam fruit;
Tala gala nindoye.	His head is not yet ripe.
Kārwul māti danda;	His hand too is a tundri root;
Danda gala nindoye.	His hand is not yet ripe.
Neka jhuleh kema	O boy, don't shake your hand too much
Danda dole māyār.	Or it will be broken, boy.

2

Huh dusār dusār buba huh dusār roy buba

Neyura dusār reha buba.	The haldi oil has been rubbed down, father.
Kānde hāwar bojha buba.	A heavy load for a small *hāwar*, father.
Reh teke bojha buba,	Its weight is the same though you bring it down,
Teh teke bojha buba.	Its weight is the same though you raise it up.
Nāwa bojha reha buba.	Bring down the weight, father.

585 Then while a circle of motiari stood singing, others bathed the boy and re-tied his hair in three or four plaits. They decorated him, painting his eyes with black and white powder, and making stars of yellow haldi on his face with a splayed castor-twig. They put a new crown, the Lagir Maur, over his head and face. So attired he went round greeting everyone. A pot of haldi-water was hung from the roof of the booth.

The Lagir

Now the drums began to sound; the chelik moved out in formation from the bridegroom's camp and began to move round the booth. The whole place began to stir. Soon with grand display the bride's drummers came down the road. They were led by two lines of boys waving antlers in the air; [292] one boy was dressed in peacock's feathers, another had a gay cowrie jacket. They advanced, placed the horns on the ground, raised them with loud cries, retired, then came on again. They reached the booth and danced near by.

The bride's elder sister's husband came out of the house with the bride on his shoulders and a group of men held a canopy over them. A man similarly related brought out the bridegroom from his camp. As the two parties approached the booth, the drumming increased in volume, rows of girls singing and clashing their cymbals followed, a 'bison' appeared pursued by hunters, and a dummy giant whirled into the centre of the scene.

The two parties, the boy's party leading, now went round the booth, outside, seven times anti-clockwise. The drummers went ahead, the girls followed, clouds of dust rose in the air. When this was done, bride and bridegroom were made to stand at the west side of the booth, and their clothes were knotted together. The girl's elder brother and four other men climbed the booth, and poured a little liquor and then a whole potful of haldi-water over the pair. In Malakot, where brooms were tied to the tops of the nine poles, the men threw them down and shook the booth violently.

2: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1947 AW32 Gond AW32
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585 This is the supreme moment of the marriage, the ceremony that finally asserts the union of bride and bridegroom,[1] the ultimately binding element in the long-protracted ceremonies. Bride and bridegroom were now man and wife.

Song

[539]

To manda batti dai ;	There is the cattle's resting-place ;
Aga padda manta dai.	There is a calf there, mother.
Padda dohi dâka dai.	I am going to tie that calf.
Sono ta dâmir dai,	There is a golden rope,
Padda poya hewo dai.	But the calf won't let me catch her.

Carrying off the Bride

Immediately the boy seized the bride, rushed her once round the booth, and carried her off to his camp, followed by a row of motiari singing enthusiastically. The bride's elder sister has the right to try to stop them: she stood in the way and was only appeased by the present of a cloth.

Ceremonial Greeting

In a few minutes the motiari came to bring the newly-married pair back to the booth for tika, the ceremonial greeting by relatives and friends. They sat down on a mat to the west of the booth, each supported by motiari, and everyone in turn put a rice-mark on their foreheads and a small present in the dish before them. As people bent down to do this, old women poured haldi over their backs and often tried to undo their clothes and smear their naked buttocks. There was much ribald laughter and a lot of fun.

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The motiari stood round singing as loudly as they could. Each relative was greeted in turn. Here is the song they used when the boy's father came for tika.

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Wilor willor-manda buba !	The booth is shaking, father!
Mandât korku wâr-tu buba.	The branches of the booth have withered, father.
Sônde tika tika buba.	Do the tika, father.
Wale bera kema buba.	Don't be late, father.
Pile karau karau buba.	The birds grow hungry, father.
Karun manda paron buba.	I can't bear to be hungry, father.
Niya marri lâruna buba.	This is your darling son, father.

[1] The essential and binding part of the marriage ceremony varies in different parts. In the Punjab it consists of the *phera* or circumambulation of the sacrificial fire. In the United Provinces the young couple walk round not a fire but the marriage shed or pole. In the east of these provinces and also in Bengal and Bihar and Orissa, the binding part of the ceremony is generally the *sindurdan* or painting of the bride's forehead with vermilion. Amongst certain castes such as the Hari, the bride and bridegroom smear each other with their blood, which they obtain by pricking their fingers with a thorn. In Bombay the higher castes follow the practice of circumambulation. The lower castes sprinkle rice over the bride and bridegroom, while some pour milk or water over the joined hands of the couple. In Orissa their right hands are tied together with *kusa* grass, or their left hands when the bride is a widow. In Madras there are various ceremonies, such as making them eat from the same dish, or knotting their garments together, or pouring water over them so that it runs from the man to the woman. But the most common is for the bridegroom to tie the *tali* or necklace round the bride's neck. The Brahmin bridegroom places the bride's foot seven times on a mill-stone, a symbol of constancy.—*Census of India, 1911, Report for Bengal, Bihar and Orissa*, p. 322.

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The Marriage Sermon

At this point the Gaita and one or two elders sat down and delivered a sort of sermon. One man spoke, then another took up the tale, and a third continued. 'Now we have linked you two together. May you always have enough to eat and drink. May you live together happily. Bear many sons and daughters. Do not forget your parents. Greet the visitor at your house with food and water.' 585

The Farewell

When the tedious business of the tika was over, the bride and groom were taken back to the groom's camp and their crowns were removed. The boy was taken by his party out of the village to the road which ran near by. After a little while the girl, led by her father and escorted by two motiari (her own sisters) and preceded by drummers from her old ghotul, followed. When they came to the road, the girl bade a last farewell to her chelik and motiari. Accompanied by her two sisters, she went to each in turn and wept before them. She gave a pice to each of the chelik and they 'kissed' her farewell.

The two samdhi again sat down, drank a little and threw haldi-water over each other. 'See, from of old was our relationship ordained. May the Departed guard and continue it!' Then suddenly two chelik picked up the bride and bridegroom and they went off very quickly, a line of motiari walking behind them.

Song

[539]

Kāka ghar gayen wo dai,	We went to uncle's house, mother,
Burkya mās khain wo dai.	There they eat beef.
Dāda ghar gayen wo dai,	We went to brother's house, mother,
Bokri mās khain wo dai.	There they eat goat.
Didi ghar gayen wo dai,	We went to sister's house, mother,
Kukri mās khain wo dai.	There they eat chicken.
Hamla bāsi paj dein wo dai.	But we like to eat stale *paj*.

The New Home

When the party came to the boundary of their own village, the Gaita drew a line of rice-flour across the path and placed seven aonra rings upon it. They stepped across this and went home without looking round. When bride and bridegroom reached their house, the boy's mother came out to greet them. She washed their feet and drank a little of the dirty water. She took her daughter-in-law into the house, and presently brought her out again into the court, where those of the villagers who had not been able to go for the wedding came to do tika and gave their presents. Then bride and groom were taken back into the house; offerings were made to the Departed and the ring-cowrie was put into the Pot of the Departed to symbolise the fact that the bride had now joined her husband's clan and after death would henceforth be numbered with the ancestors of her new home. Other offerings were made to the pots hanging from the roof and the grain-bins. 'These are all yours now', exclaimed the mother. 'Live here happily with us.'

The Wedding Crowns

At the end of a marriage the wedding crowns must be properly disposed of, for it would be highly dangerous to throw them away where a witch could get at them. It will be remembered that there are two crowns, the Neyi

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385 Maur or Oil Crown, which is worn during the period when the bride and bridegroom are anointed with oil and haldi, and the Lagir Maur, which is put on immediately before the critical moment of the marriage.

The customs vary from place to place. After the marriage the Oil Crown is generally thrown into a stream with some small offerings to the Yer Kanyang. The other crown is sometimes tied to the central pillar of the bridegroom's house. In Palari members of the Marrai clan bury the crown by this pillar and make offerings of liquor to the Departed above it, in order that the wife will always be faithful to her husband. In Kokori the Naitami and Marrai clans put the crowns in a hollow tamarind tree standing in the village. Other clans tie them to the pillars of their houses. Here they throw pulse and rice on the crowns in the name of the Departed. In the north of the State, at Penjori for example, when they are grinding haldi, preparing oil and husking rice in preparation for the marriage, the chelik and motiari go in procession to the ghotul and tie a little crown to the pillar in the name of Lingo. They then go to the Hanalkot and tie another crown there in the name of the Departed. In the Bara Dongar Pargana they sometimes tie the crown after the marriage in the shrine of the clan-god.

Even when a chelik or motiari has left one ghotul and joined another, his old ghotul may remember him at the time of his marriage by tying a crown to their pillar. This was done in 1940 at Penjori when the chelik put up a crown for a boy who had left them a year before to work as Lamhada for a girl in Kanker.

THE FOURTH DAY

I was not able to see the ceremonies of the fourth day at Sidhawand, but at Malakot I saw them twice; the procedure was, I believe, the same at Sidhawand.

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FIG. 21. Squirt, used in fun for spraying people with water at a marriage
Length 2' 7"

After the ceremonies of welcome to the new daughter-in-law were concluded, or on the following morning, bride and bridegroom were brought out of the house and made to stand together on an old mat.

Wherever I have seen this done, the couple affected the greatest distaste and stood averted from each other's presence. The attendant motiari first handed the boy a toilet-twig; he gave it to the girl and she threw it away. He gave her another one, and she threw that away also. Then she gave him one and he threw it away. He took a fourth and cleaned his teeth with it, and gave it to her. She cleaned her teeth and threw it down.

This rite may symbolize the intimacy of married life—I am not sure. The next appears to be a test of potency. The chelik gave the bridegroom a number of stout poles about six feet long. He handed them to his wife; she threw some away and returned others to him and he had to break them. The boys had already notched them half way down so this was not very difficult.

Suddenly without warning the boy seised his bride and spat in her mouth. When she had recovered, she handed him a gourd of water; he filled his mouth

Plate XXIX

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ABOVE: The bride spits at her husband

BELOW: The husband proves his virility by breaking legs

[p. 128a]

Plate XXI

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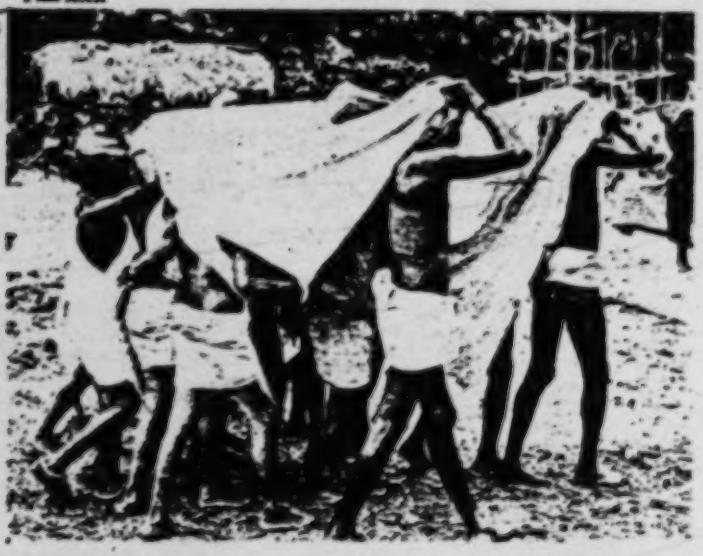

ABOVE: Bride being taken out for the Lagir procession

BELOW: The bride bids farewell to her old companions

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585 with the water, caught her and spat again in her mouth. Motiari gave him another gourd of water and he passed it on to his bride; she twice filled her mouth and spat all over him.

Now the motiari gathered round and undid the plaits of hair that had been tied during the wedding.

Song

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Sura heri sahāli sahāli he buba,	There are seven links in my plait,
Nawa sahal lehika lehika he buba.	I am going to undo the links.
Bona lārne lehika lehika he buba?	For whose love will you undo it?
Sātu jor dāda lor dāda lor he buba;	I have seven brothers;
Dādān lārne lehika lehika he buba.	For love of my brothers I will undo it.
Bārāng his lehika lehika he buba?	What will you give before you undo it?
Dobir bhainsi hiydka hiydka he buba,	I'll give a buffalo from my herd.
Tāne yise hema roy hema roy he buba,	Don't give a buffalo,
Dobir hinja poyor roy poyor roy he buba.	Or the herd will be desolate.

585 When the hair was undone, the motiari combed it, and then bride and groom threw water and rubbish over each other. They needed a bath and the motiari poured water over them.

Then two motiari sat down presenting little laps for ritual occupation. The boy sat down, and the bride came to sit in his lap. She stayed there a moment, then jumped up and hit him on the back. Then she sat down, and he prepared to sit in her lap. But at the right moment she wriggled aside and he tumbled to the ground amid roars of laughter. But he jumped up and hit her two or three times with his clenched fist.

The fun now became general. Chelik filled their mouths with water and blew it over the motiari. The girls filled leaf-cups with cow-dung and spilled it over the chelik. Meanwhile the Gaita's wife collected the haldi-stained clothes of bride and groom; someone brought out a pot and went round begging for fire. He pushed handfuls of rubbish against private parts saying, 'Set them on fire!' At last they put the pot on the fire and boiled the clothes. But they were soon brought out and tied in a bundle. The Gaita poured a little liquor on the four corners and they lifted up the bundle seven times. Bride and groom undid the wet clothes and threw them over each other. 831] Someone pretended to be a Ganda with a large imitation penis and went round trying to sell the clothes.

At last the Gaita caught hold of the married pair and dragged them into the house for a well-earned meal, which they took together in ceremonial state.

The Last Rites

The marriage is over but a curious and interesting rite remains. Bride and bridegroom go for one last visit to the ghotul. The bride first massages her husband and then every boy in turn. The chelik send the husband off to his house, and a little later tell the girl to follow him. When she refuses three or four of them take her by force, push her into the room with her husband and shut them in. I have seen this done at Malakot and Nayanar. I will describe the Malakot incident here.

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FIG. 22. Iron lamp-stand placed in the centre of the marriage booth
Height 5'

In the evening, after everyone had eaten their supper, the chelik and motiari went singing to escort the bridal pair to their new house, which had been entirely deserted for their benefit. All the other people had gone away. The chelik and motiari danced before the house for some time, the newly-married pair dancing with them. Then the little boys and girls were sent away, and the seniors caught hold of the bride and groom and pushed them into the house. Here the girl stood still while the husband was taken into a small inner room. The Sirdar spread a new mat, placed a cloth on it (they sometimes put oil on it 'to make it slippery') and made him lie down on one side. Then they pulled the girl into the room and made her lie down beside him. The boys patted them farewell, and ran out shutting the door behind them.

Outside they ran to the wall of the house, trying to peep in and hear what was going on, laughing and excited. The boys ought now to have caught a cock and taken it away, plucking its feathers all along the road, to roast it in the ghotul. But the groom's old mother had been too clever for them and had hidden all her poultry.

This cock is known variously as the *lod-kor* or 'sleeping cock', *pussi-kor* or 'semen cock', *konda-kor* or 'pubic-hairs cock', *pude-kor* or 'vagina cock', and *gri-kor* or 'copulation cock'. The usual custom, as we shall see at Nayanar, is to catch this cock, pluck the feathers going along the road, roast it in or near the ghotul or the ghotul camp, and then when everyone is asleep to push burnt feathers, entrails, bits of bone, into the mouths, ears, noses and private parts of the sleeping children—a joke that never fails to cause the greatest mirth and delight.

The theory seems to be that the cock is some sort of compensation. 'He is eating her vagina; we are eating the vagina cock.'

In Aturgaon I was told that the ghotul leaders gave a little sermon to the husband when they shut him up with his bride. 'Take this girl; she is now your property. Give us a sleeping-cock in exchange. Sleep with the girl in happiness and joy; may she bear a child within a year; it is your duty.'

The chelik of Munjmeta told me that where boy and girl belonged to the same ghotul, and where that ghotul was one in which boys and girls paired off in some kind of permanent relationship, they had a different custom. When the marriage was over, the bride returned to the ghotul and combed the hair and massaged the limbs of her old ghotul-husband for the last time. She slept with him for an hour, and then the chelik took her to her husband and shut them up together. The cock in this

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case was not stolen, but was given by the husband in compensation for taking a girl away from the ghotul. 585

As they escort the newly married pair to bed the boys and girls sing a characteristic song.

Dulha cho māndo dulha cho māndo,	In the bridegroom's booth,
Parwāda jhulaya.	Swings the pigeon. 585
Dulhi cho māndo dulhi cho māndo,	In the bride's booth, 539
Tendha latwa loi baba lot.	The lizard copulates and copulates. 831
Pālak bhāji waare re leha bhāji hundiy jai re leha.	Spinach is drying on a leaf.
Jara jara tenda bane se re leha tenda pāni nākin tire re leha.	There is a pair of weighted balances (of a well), but he won't use them.
Palārigaon cho jaliya gānja,	The long-tailed cock of Palari,
Dongrigura cho kāri kom,	The black hen of Dongrigura,
Dandāh chathi abbich dehi.	Every moment they want to copulate.

When everything was over, at Sidhawand the headman and the village elders purified the village from any possible evil introduced by the many visitors. They sprinkled liquor round the houses and offered a chick to the Village Mother. 585 783

V. The Navanar Marriages: A Different Procedure

Such was the marriage ritual at Sidhawand and Malakot. I believe that a very similar procedure is followed all over eastern Bastar. We must now take a brief glance at the other type of marriage, where the main ceremony takes place at the bridegroom's house and where a number of minor details differ. 585

The marriage I am now to describe was celebrated at Amasara and Nayanar on 15 April 1941 and the following days. On the first evening the bride was prepared as at Sidhawand. Her motiari sat round her all night, weeping and consoling her. The next morning the bridegroom, escorted by his chelik and motiari, came to Amasara to fetch her. On the way, at the village boundary, the Gaita made the usual line of ash and offered liquor in three saja leaves, saying, 'Let there be no trouble and no quarrels. Let us return in safety'. They stepped over the line and went on their way, none looking back.

The Farewell Ceremonies

Both parties cooked separately out-of-doors in the fields. During the day there was the usual application of haldi, weeping, exchange of presents and some heavy drinking. When I reached Amasara on the afternoon of this second day, I found a scene of great animation. Several groups of boys were dancing with mandri drums; in another part of the field rows of girls were dancing and singing Reio. Another group of motiari in boy's clothes, with waistcoats and turbans, were preparing for the Jhoria Endanna when the bridegroom has to recognise his bride amidst a group of dancing motiari disguised as boys, an incident which I study fully in Chapter XVI. In the middle sat a row of old women, swaddhi to each other, their bodies covered with haldi-water and singing drunkenly.

It was getting late and presently the bride's parents went to the boy's people and said, 'Now you are our daughter's mother and father; we are giving her

•585 to you'. At this the girl went weeping to her friends and gave them little keepsakes. As evening fell, the party left the village. Bride and bridegroom walked most of the way, but whenever they came to a field the chelik carried them across, and they threw pulse and rice onto the ground in honour of the Earth Mother. In Telanga, the bride had to cross a stream. She brought two aonra rings and threw them left and right as she went over in honour of the Water Maiden (Yer Kanyang) for she too was still a maiden.

The bride was brought to her new house rather late at night, but her mother-in-law received her, washing her feet and giving her a kindly welcome. In Telanga, the boy's motiari made the girl stand on a new mat covered with peacock's feathers for this greeting.

Bringing in the Manda Wood

At about 10 p.m. the chelik of Nayanar and visiting villages went to bring the boughs for the marriage-booth. After the Gaita had cut the mahua tree, food was given to the boys and they had supper there in the jungle. They returned to the village, dancing and drumming, shouting *Kiddar-pude* continually. A number of women waiting in the court of the house tried to stop them entering, but the manda branches were full of red ants, and the boys scattered these over the women and dispersed them. Then they danced banging the branches on the ground till the courtyard and road was alive with the ants; they chased any girl they saw, and rained a stinging shower over her.

The booth was hastily erected; there were only four poles and no brooms tied at the top. A rope of paddy straw was tied round and a string of mango leaves. The important thing to notice is that this booth was put up inside the courtyard of the house—I saw the same thing at Telanga—and this completely altered the whole ceremony: the grand procession of the Lagir became obviously impossible.

Now weary and bitten all over with red ants I went to bed. I am told that the party danced and drank all night; I can well believe it, they looked jaded enough next day.

Early the following morning, the Rawat's wife as usual dug up a little earth, [731] but here there was no chasing of a motiari. An old woman put the earth in her sari and tied it over her buttocks, afterwards letting it fall in a very vulgar manner. As they returned the girls took grass from the thatch of a house and put it in their hair; later they stuck it in the centre pole of the booth.

The Worship of the Drums

This rite, which does not seem to be known in eastern Bastar, is very important in the central parganas. Before beginning to dance, the chelik put three mandri and a wooden gong together on the ground. The two leaders of the ghotul removed their turbans, made a small pattern of rice-flour and offered liquor to Tallur Muttai, Lingo and the Departed. Then four other boys caught hold of the drums and at a given signal picked them up all together with a loud cry, while other boys pulled the 'priests' over backwards. Only after this could the chelik dance. As visiting villages arrived the chelik marched up the road, with grand and triumphant drumming, and worshipped their drums in the same place.

The usual rites are now performed; the interminable application of haldi, the taking of omens, the tying of the plaits, the bathing of bride and groom.

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In some villages the Gaita takes the marriage pair to the shrine of the Village Mother to offer sacrifice and ask if all will be well. 585

Rites of Anointing

On the Lagir day, the groom was first taken round the pole inside the booth five times; this corresponds to the *khûri bînwar* of the Gond of the Central Provinces. The girl was taken round later and carried swinging to and fro into the house.

In this type of marriage, bride and groom are again and again carried out of the house by their attendants to be anointed. After fifteen or twenty minutes they are taken back; then after a rest, brought out again. They are made to sit on a wooden *pîdha* seat under the booth.

Songs

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The seat is made of sandalwood, O sister.
Come out girl and sit upon the seat.
It is in the raj of your mother and father.
It is in the raj of your brothers and relatives.
There is no kind of trick about it.

From Naria village, I have a few of the songs sung by the bride herself when her different relatives come to anoint her.

When her brother comes, she sings:

Give the oil lovingly;
Give the ghee costly as gold, brother;
Make the good oil climb my body.

When different *akomdms* relatives come, she sings:

Put a mark on my forehead, friends;
Put much haldi on my body.
You are the daughters of a great house,
I am your little sister.
How happy I was in my own home!
Now I go to a stranger's house.
Who can tell if I will live,
Who can tell if I will die there?

When her brother's wife comes, she sings:

I used to be in your house, bhauji,
Now you are giving me to a stranger.
You used to give me good food to eat,
But now you are sending me away.
When you come to visit me
Who knows if they will let me give you food or no?

At the end of the anointing ceremony, girls lifted the bride up and swung her vigorously to and fro as they carried her into the house.

Song

We will hold you fast,
We will not let you fall.
Swing, bride, swing.
We hold you safely in our hands

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585 The Lagir was a very tame affair compared with what I saw at Sidhawand and Malakot. One of the boy's samdhi led the procession. He was followed by the boy, then by the girl, and then by five motiari singing. After completing the seven circuits, they tied the clothes of bride and groom together, and made them sit down for tika. When this was done a man poured water over them from the roof of the booth.[1] After this they were taken outside the house and the little rites of toilet-twig, undoing the plaits and breaking wood were performed as at Malakot.

The Tour of the Village

Now chelik and motiari escorted the bride and bridegroom round the village on a sort of farewell tour. The party first visited the ghotul, where the boy and girl threw rice and copper coins into the building. Thence they went to the Gaita's house and round the village. As the party entered each compound the house-folk came out to wash their feet, put tika on their foreheads and embraced them. The groom tied bead-necklaces round the necks of the young children of the house. The housewife gave rice and a coin or two, all of which was carefully collected in a basket by the leading motiari.

The Ghotul Camp

During a marriage the cooking has to be done out-of-doors. The ghotul is closed until all is over. At Nayanar a special camp was made in a magnificent grove of mango trees. Here the boys and girls lived and entertained their visitors. On the last night, the bride and bridegroom came at sunset, and the chelik and motiari of Nayanar sat round in a great circle. The bridegroom, who had been the Sirdar, attended by two motiari, gave necklaces and rings to every boy and girl. The rings were strung on two big *sutia*-torcs. The bead necklaces were tied together as they came from the bazaar. These gifts must have cost at least twenty rupees.

The Bedding of the Bridal Pair

Bride and bridegroom went to their house for supper; chelik and motiari had theirs in the camp and fed their many visitors. At about 11 p.m. girls and boys went to fetch the bride and her husband. They 'stole away secretly', as I was told, and stayed a little while in the camp. Then suddenly the chelik seized the girl and her husband and took them to their house. They went willingly enough at first, but when they reached the bridal chamber, though the girl entered without persuasion, the boy made a great deal of fuss. But at last they pushed him in, spread a new mat, and made them lie down together. The chelik ran out and shut the door, shouting with excitement. It was noticeable that no older person came near or showed the slightest interest.

585 522 This time the chelik were able to catch a cock. They took it down to the camp and made a fire in a field near by and roasted it. In the meantime the younger children went to sleep. About midnight, the boys who had bedded the married pair, and eaten the cock, came round with handfuls of offal and burnt bones and feathers. They pushed these into the mouths and privates of the sleeping girls and boys, who woke spitting and protesting but

[1] This is possibly the oldest part of the ceremony. Cain, writing in 1876, describes how a Koi woman was made to bend her head while the man leant over her and friends poured water out of a bottle-gourd. 'When the water ran off his head to that of the woman they were regarded as man and wife.'—J. Cain, 'The Bhadrachallam Taluka', *The Indian Antiquary*, Vol. V (1876), p. 337.

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with a pleased recognition that the marriage at which they had so earnestly assisted had been consummated.[1]

VI. The Ghotul's Share in the Ceremony

Nāg nāgin he bihao ma dondiya he salmal. The little fish are kept busy at the cobras' wedding.—Muria saying

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No wonder that there is no greater threat to a Muria boy or girl than that the ghotul members will not attend their marriage. For from beginning to end the smooth progress of the rite depends on the chelik and motiari. For a week beforehand the motiari instruct the bride in the ghotul. Chelik and motiari accompany the bridegroom when he goes to fetch his bride; they sing and dance at every point of the ceremony; the chelik go to bring in the wood for the booth and the girls direct them to its site by dancing on the spot with a mahua tree. Boys and girls go together to fetch the earth for the manda-platform, and dance round it when it is ready. The motiari attend through all the long-drawn business of anointing, they carry the bridal pair about on their backs; they bathe them, do their hair, feed them and weep with them. At the central moment of the rite, it is the drumming of the chelik and singing of the motiari that provides dignity, colour and excitement. Chelik and motiari again assist at the concluding ceremonies in the bridegroom's house, and it is the chelik who ultimately arrange the consummation of the marriage.

But these ritual duties are only the beginning of their task. They have to see to the entertainment of a large number of guests. The Sirdar arranges for wood and organizes the dances; the Belosa sees to the supply of water and leaves. She and her motiari have to make leaf-cups and plates for the male visitors (they only give leaves to women visitors, considering that they should be able to make their own). This in itself is a very considerable task, but in addition nearly all the cooking is done in the ghotul camp, and chelik and motiari have to serve food at meals. I have never seen girls work so hard as at Nayanar, where there were three weddings one after another: as the chelik were leading one husband and his bride to bed, the motiari were preparing the next bride for her fate. The girls never seemed to stop working; they were engaged day and night; yet though they began to look very tired

[1] Similar customs are observed by other tribes. In Siraiti, I watched Bison-horn Maria girls escort the bride to bed, though here the groom had to drag her into his house. Then a jovial party stole a cock and scattered its feathers along the path. The Juang boys escort the bridegroom from the *darbar* (dormitory), sometimes tying him hand and foot, to where his bride is waiting. They make him sit with her and say, 'See, here is your house: look to it. Here is a new girl, big-breasted and young. Do not disappoint her.' The boys piss inside the house, throw rubbish over the floor, then tie the door and run away. Bride and groom must clean the house before the marriage is consummated. I have witnessed a similar ceremony in a Bondo village.

For the Kota of the Nilgiri Hills, consummation was in the nature of a test, like the custom of 'bundling' in Wales. In the morning, the girl was questioned whether she liked her husband: if she did, the marriage was confirmed, if not, it was annulled.—E. Thurston, *Ethnographic Notes in Southern India* (Madras, 1907), p. 62. Here, as with the Hill Maria and other very primitive tribes, the payment of bride-price and consummation was the marriage: there was little more to it.

By Hindus of Western Bengal, the third night after the wedding is called Phulsejya, or the flower bed. 'Eavesdropping goes on freely.'—S. N. Roy, 'Bivre-Achar in West Bengal', *Man in India*, Vol. VIII, p. 190. In Mysore, the Brahmins observe the beautiful garbhadana ceremony, when the husband in a room filled with flowers pours fruit into his wife's lap and the priest prays 'May a male embryo enter thy womb as an arrow the quiver'.—M. N. Srinivas, op. cit., pp. 134f.

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towards the end, I did not once see them strained or quarrelsome. Their tremendous vitality kept the thing on the move and made everyone cheerful and happy.

In return for all this work, the chelik and motiari seem to get very little, one meal a day and a little liquor. The bride and bridegroom distribute small keepsakes, rings and beads. The motiari of the bride's ghotul demand and receive four annas as *mundi*-cowrie. The chelik also demand a new mandri drum from the bridegroom in compensation for the loss of one of their girls. They are generally given eight annas instead. This present is called *sakta*. The boy also has to give *chitkul*-cymbals, or four annas, to his own chelik.

People treat the chelik and motiari with great respect, for there is great fear of offending them—a strike, which is not unknown, can upset the entire proceedings. It is

DETAIL

FIG. 23. *Chapali-mundi* necklace, from Kuntpadar, of red, white and blue beads
Length 3' 8"

noteworthy also that there is no exchange of obscenities between the older people and the ghotul members. When the old women smear their dirty hands on all available male faces, catching hold of their private parts or pouring haldi over their buttocks, they never do it to the chelik. It would be considered equally shocking for a married man to poke his stick at a motiari

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or to abuse her as he may do freely to the married women. There is no doubt about it: these girls and boys are set apart. They must not be touched by sophisticated adult hands.

VII. The Significance of the Marriage Ceremony

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Where both boy and girl belong to the same village and come from the same ghotul, the procedure is simplified and shortened, but otherwise follows the same lines as in the foregoing accounts. It will be seen that, in spite of various differences, the essentials of the rite are everywhere the same. The fundamental things seem to me to be these—the preparation and instruction of the bride in the ghotul, the ceremonial fetching of the bride by the bridegroom and his party, the building of a marriage-booth with its associated magical materials and patterns, the exchange of gifts and payment of a bride-price, the liberal use of oil and haldi to consecrate the bride and bridegroom, the procession round a marriage pole or booth seven times (the last two items are obvious borrowings from Hinduism), the tying together of the bridal pair, the pouring water over them (probably a development of a Maria custom), minor rituals designed to emphasize the unity of the couple and to ensure the potency of the bridegroom, the last visit to the ghotul and the official bedding of the couple by the chelik.

Let us consider the meaning of these essentials in more detail. In a brilliant analysis of the marriage ritual of the Bihari Kayasth, W. G. Archer takes a comparison from modern art. 'If we are to find an analogy for this wedding ritual, the nearest would be a surrealist poem, ballet or novel. In a surrealist work the action has a strange power and a mysterious charm. Strange persons develop their intriguing contacts and the action has an air of irrational urgency. On analysis it is seen that many of the actions are symbolic and the poem, novel or the ballet generates its power from the semi-conscious associations which its dialogue, gestures, scenery and action evoke. In the ritual of a Kayasth wedding, there is a similar use of irrational action, a similar use of persons with a strangely inflated power, and a similar use of semi-conscious symbols. The meaning of the ritual may be submerged and, for many, may be scarcely comprehended but its basis is in a symbolic system and its total effect is overpowering.'[1]

This will apply also to a Muria wedding, though the meaning here is sometimes more obvious; the Kayasth is a highly developed community and naturally resorts more to symbolic concealment of its real interests and desires. The different elements in a Muria marriage can be easily distinguished. There are first the many rites that emphasize the break with the old life and the entry to the new. There are the symbolic actions and materials to express the sexual aspect of the marriage and to ensure its fertility. There are the symbolic or overt arrangements to protect bride and bridegroom at this critical moment of their fortunes. The social and business aspect of the union of the two families is always prominent.

The length, complexity and extravagance of the marriage ritual is necessary to impress on boys and girls who are so used to love and sex the importance of the step they are now taking. Marriage here does not, as in so many other cultures, mark an initiation into the mysteries of sex. It is not, usually, the binding together of two people who have fallen in love with each

[1] From *The Wedding of the Writers*, the manuscript of which I have been privileged to see before publication.

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other. It represents instead the end of a life of sexual and domestic freedom and the companionship of young people. It marks the beginning of economic responsibility, a change of residence, a transformation of the whole way of life. The ritual is adapted to emphasize this. There is the long week of preparation in the ghotul and the vigil of song and weeping that ends it; there is the parental fuss; the obvious trouble and expense for everyone; the solemn regard for omens; the new clothes and ornaments. I have often been reminded of the preliminaries to an operation—the bathing and shaving of the body, the tests and examinations, the rendering of the person aseptic, the creation of a sense that the patient is a being already separate and apart who will never be quite the same again. So now chelik and motiari are prepared for an operation that will sever them for ever from the carefree joys of youth.

The importance of this operation is further emphasized by the treatment of bridegroom and bride as the Raja and Rani of their brief matrimonial court. They are crowned; the leaders of their community defer to them and treat them with respect; their 'army' and 'police' accompany them everywhere, even when they go to perform their natural functions; they must never walk but always be carried about; at the time of tika everyone salutes them; they are 'Raja and Rani for two days and a half'.

This is a time of peculiar supernatural danger and the measures taken to avoid it find their parallels in many parts of the world. The crowns are not only symbols of royalty but correspond to the wedding-veil. Bride and bridegroom are also covered with a cloth both at the crisis of the Lagir and other important moments of the ceremony. This, and the refusal of bride and groom to look at each other, is connected partly with sexual modesty, partly with the belief that it is dangerous even to see dangerous persons.[1] Bride and bridegroom remain silent for most of the ceremony; certainly they never speak to one another. 'This is a common taboo upon persons passing through a critical period, and the principle behind it is a natural impulse of egoistic sensibility, a sort of recognition of the importance of the occasion, combined with more or less of spiritual fear, either of general danger, or in this case, of danger from each other.'[2]

The ceremonial beating of the bride by the bridegroom and of the bridegroom by the bride, which occurs several times during the ceremony, is regarded by Westermarck as intended to drive away evil influences and may also be connected 'with the idea of gaining power'.[3] Protection from evil spirits is probably also the aim, or one of the aims, of the Jhoria Endanna when a group of motiari including the bride dress up as boys and the bridegroom has to try to recognize his future wife.

Among the demon-scarers employed during the ceremony may be mentioned the brooms tied to the booth, the oil so freely used, the tying of the hair in plaits, the carrying of bride and groom over the threshold and the ceremonial bath. Brooms are important as sweeping away ghosts and spirits; sticks or grass from a broom are often used in magic or divination. All over the world bride and bridegroom are carried during their wedding[4] and in particular are never allowed to touch with their feet the threshold which is generally haunted by spirits. The ceremonial bath is regarded by Crawley as intended 'to neutralize the mutual dangers of contact'.[5] The magical

[1] Crawley, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 44.
[2] E. Westermarck, *The History of Human Marriage* (London, 1925), Vol. II, p. 518.
[3] Ibid., Vol. II, p. 58.
[4] Ibid., Vol. II, pp. 332ff.
[5] Crawley, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 39.

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importance of the Muria bath is emphasized by the use of the winnowing-fan (universally important in magic) to fan and drive away all risk of evil.

The red ants scattered over the marriage party are perhaps intended merely as a joke; they may, however, represent a survival of some former custom of ordeal. In British Guiana a man before marriage had to show his fitness for it by allowing himself to be sewn into a hammock full of fire ants.[1]

Yet to the participants in the marriage it is probable that its financial and social aspect is of even greater importance than the supernatural atmosphere into which they have projected themselves. The alliance of the two families is emphasized by the little rite of *samdhi-bhet* at the very beginning and by the farewell of the new relations-in-law at the end. Their prayer—'Let there be no quarrels. Let there be many children. As the root is below and branches above, so may we be united'—and again—'See, from of old was our relationship ordained. May the Departed guard and continue it'—indicates the importance of the ceremony for the family, the clan and the ancestors. This is still further shown by the presents made to various relatives and, above all, by the gifts offered to the Departed—to the Pot in the old home to compensate the ancestors for the loss of a girl, to the Pot in the new family to indicate that the bride has left her old clan and joined that of her husband.

But it is not only family and village that the motiari must now desert; she has to leave her ghotul. So gifts and compensations are given: there is a feast, a farewell massage, and marriage-crowns are often put up on the ghotul pillar. Bride and groom bid ceremonial farewell to their old companions as they set out for their new home.

So far we have dealt mainly with rites of parting and separation: other ceremonies stress the social and sexual union of bride and groom and attempt to ensure its natural fertility. The giving of the bridal ring is a world-wide symbol of union, so is the ceremony of eating together. At the end of the Lagir circumambulation (itself a rite of aggregation with a subsidiary cathartic or prophylactic purpose [2]), bride and groom are tied together and water is poured over them. On two occasions, the bridegroom or his friends carry off the bride; this may be a survival of an older tradition of marriage by capture or may merely be intended to stress the emphatic break with the old life and entry into the new.

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The sexual interest is both manifest and latent. There is little concealment or symbolism about the ceremonial bedding of the married pair, the vagina carved on the main pillar of the booth, the obscene horseplay between relatives, the constant cries of 'Penis' and 'Vagina', the songs, the jokes, the abuse. In such sexual jokes, says W. G. Archer, 'is a release of repressed energy which when applied to the marriage must necessarily make it fertile'.[3]

Other of the incidents and objects in the ritual are of a symbolic character. Some are directly sexual: thus the motiari bang the mahua branch up and down on the site of the booth just as Bison-horn Maria girls use their dancing-sticks, professedly in imitation of sexual intercourse. The pouring of water over bride and groom is a symbol of world-wide distribution, and the breaking of wooden poles links up with many examples given by Westermarck,[4] where

[1] Sir E. F. Im Thurn, *Among the Indians of Guiana* (London, 1883), p. 221.
[2] Westermarck, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 513ff.
[3] *The Wedding of the Writers.* And Westermarck says, 'The sexual indulgence of the wedding guests may, on the principle of homoeopathic magic, be a means of assisting bride and bridegroom in achieving the reproductive aims of their union'.—Op. cit., Vol. II, p. 592.
[4] Westermarck, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 437.

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things are broken to ensure or facilitate the consummation of the marriage. The Berber blow a cane to pieces. The Zulu bride breaks a spear. Among the Yakut dry rods are broken and burnt.

Haldi, with its yellow colour, is both a ghost scarer and a sex-symbol. It is significant that one of its forty-six ancient synonyms is *kamala*, 'lustful' and others refer to it as 'night'.[1] The oil with which it is mixed is, to the Muria mind at least, another sex-symbol, recalling the oil used in massage and that traditionally put on a lover's mat 'to make it slippery'.

Other objects are concerned more with the fruit of intercourse, for the fertility so carefully avoided in the ghotul is now passionately desired. The kalsa-pitcher is an obvious symbol of the womb: it is filled with fertile grain and a lamp (which stands for the act of love in folk-poetry as in Pahari paintings) covers its mouth. The arrow is another obvious sex-symbol[2]; the very interesting song on p. 119 connects the marriage arrow with the arrow used to cut the umbilical cord of the first child: here too the kalsa-pitcher becomes the pot from which the mother is bathed during the ceremonial uncleanness of the puerperium. The decorations of the booth, the strings of mango leaves so green and fertile, the coconut, the grain, the burning lamps, all hint at love and love's fruit. Even the curious rite where the bride and groom throw away their toilet-twigs and spit at each other may aim at ensuring union and productiveness. Most obvious of all the symbols are those connected with earth, for woman is everywhere the earth whom man must plough and sow.

The incidents and furniture of a Muria marriage, therefore, have not come together by chance. They are purposeful and charged with meaning. They express in vivid and dramatic form the working of the Muria mind. There could hardly be a more emphatic means of bringing home to a young couple their social, sexual and domestic union.

[1] See *N.I. Notes and Queries*, Vol. II, p. 39.

[2] Westermarck gives many examples, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 490; so does Archer, *The Blue Grove*, pp. 172ff.

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sometimes grows properly and sometimes fails, so a child may die or rust or wither for lack of rain and so die in the womb.'

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The Muria do not hide the facts of death from their children or restrain them from witnessing the gloomy rites by which they dispose of their dead. Indeed, as at marriages, chelik and motiari have their special duties at a funeral. The chelik generally carry the corpse out to the place of disposal; the motiari accompany them there and afterwards make leaf-plates and cups for the funeral feast. If a pregnant woman or a mother with a very young baby dies, only the chelik may take the body out beyond a stream and dispose of it.

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All over India it is believed that those who die unmarried turn into unsatisfied and petulant demons. They have been frustrated in obtaining the loveliest things in life and for all time they are miserable. It is curious that it is not usually virginity but the fact that the dead boy or girl has not passed through the marriage ceremony that matters. A married boy who has not consummated the marriage is said to live in some saja tree on his property to protect it. Women may go near, but not menstruous or pregnant women or their husbands. The Muria take special precautions when a chelik or motiari dies. The Gaita drives nails into the four corners of the grave and the ghotul members make a special offering to the ghost begging it not to trouble them. In some villages it is believed that the ghost of a motiari lives under a mahua tree and the cooking for the funeral feast therefore is done in its shade. In Padbera, the Muria believe that when a motiari dies she becomes a Mirchuk and lives in a pipal tree, and a chelik becomes a Matia and lives in a banyan. The usual Gondi word for the ghost of a motiari is Nelang-jural; occasionally she occupies an old ant-hill. Very young children live in a banyan and drink its milky sap. In Bakulwahi twelve years ago a motiari died and the Gaita drove nails into the four corners of the ghotul building and went round it with the chelik in procession in order to protect it against ghostly invasion. They sacrificed a pig saying, 'Are you going to stay here, or will you go away?' When the pig ate the rice which was as usual offered to it the Muria understood that the motiari was ready to go away. They carried the pig to the boundary of the village and killed it there and thus freed the ghotul from any danger from the ghost of that girl. In Palari the Muria said that when a chelik was killed by a tiger he turned into a Baghmeri-bhut. When he died of ordinary illness he became a Kuara-bhut, revealing his presence in a whirlwind. When a very young chelik died he became an Arajatta-bhut and entered into people's stomachs, giving them a lot of pain. In Palnar the ghost of the chelik or motiari attacks whichever member of the ghotul is the first to get married after the death, presumably out of jealousy. When the Siraha diagnoses what is the matter he offers the usual sacrifices and, making a little man out of straw, asks the bhut to leave its victim and possess the straw-man instead. This is then carried to the boundary of the village and thrown away. Where a chelik or motiari has died in a village during the previous year, on the eve of any wedding the Gaita goes to a small date palm and ties it round and round with string saying, 'Go away from here, don't come near the boundary of our village'. He puts a large stone on the tree and the wedding can take place in safety. After the wedding he removes the stone, unties the string and offers an egg and chicken.

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In Kabonga it was said that when a chelik or motiari died, the ghost became what they called an Uriya-bhut. But they said that there was nothing very dangerous about it. 'The Uriya-bhut plays and dances just like the chelik and motiari. In fun it throws leaves and dust into the air; it blows in people's

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PERSONAL ADORNMENT AND POSSESSIONS

The Muria everywhere are at the mercy of the merchants in the bazaar, though these are not entirely indifferent to popular demand. They supply cheap aluminium armlets and anklets, glass and lac bangles, aluminium and silver neck-bands, the *kawel* necklaces of rupees known throughout Central India, and many varieties of beads. Muria chelik and motiari buy these in the bazaars and wear them. They indicate nothing except perhaps the way in which the natural taste and intelligence of the aboriginals is degraded in the interests of big business.

We may now turn to the special ornaments worn by the Muria in the different fashion areas I have named. We will begin with the Jhoria, for these are the most distinctive and interesting of all the Muria.

The Jhoria, as we have seen, are simply Hill Maria who have settled in the foothills. You can distinguish a Maria from a Jhoria girl by her breasts so charmingly displayed and the tattoo marks less charmingly marring the beauty of her face. It is not so easy to distinguish between a Jhoria chelik and a young Hill Maria boy.

Like the Hill Maria, the Jhoria give the impression of being a little over-dressed.[1] They are 'dolled up', smart, tight, fresh, alert, vivacious—altogether charming. Their clothes are worn tightly round their bodies, revealing the grace and energy of the figure. Their ornaments and especially their necklaces do not hang about them, but are drawn tight round their heads and necks. The feathers in their hair give them the perky bright appearance of young birds.

Most striking of all are their gaily coloured bead decorations. They wear head-bands, sometimes three or four of them, round the head, keeping the hair in place. Round the neck are two or more broad bead collars and a profusion of necklaces; their beautiful and elaborate designs are fully illustrated in the colour plates in this book.

Jhoria boys and girls wear ear-pendants of coloured beads (Fig. 64): some girls also wear large circular shields (*dhār*) without the usual chains, or home-made wooden *hirwa* (Fig. 73) covered with silver paper.

Bangles are not made by the Muria, and those worn by boys or girls are the usual bazaar products.

Rings play an important part in ghotul life. A boy or girl on being appointed to high office is presented with a ring: at a marriage the bride and bridegroom give rings to their old companions: a ring is buried in front of the Gaita's house before a Deo-Dandar or Pen Kolang expedition and is later given to the leader of the dance: rings are collected at a festival and offered to the clan-god.

The rings are of brass or aluminium: some are decorated with little bells (Fig. 17). Girls often wear a great many which the boys beg them to remove before beginning the massage.

Girls often wear rows of combs in their hair, with thick bunches of cowries,[2] and balls of red and green wool. Both chelik and motiari love to put flowers in their hair or over their ears.

The Jhoria chelik wear cowrie belts just above their loin-cloths. There seems no shortage of these; they may be found everywhere. Sometimes the son of well-to-do people wears a broad silver *hardan*, bought in the bazaar, of a kind used by girls.

[1] The word is W. V. Grigson's; it exactly describes my own impression—if such a phrase can be applied to people who hardly wear any clothes at all.

[2] For the use of cowries, almost universal in Bastar, see my article 'The Use of Cowries in Bastar State', *Man*, Vol. XLII (1942), pp. 121–4.

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THE MURIA AND THEIR GHOTUL

On the third day of a marriage, the motiari retire to the ghotul or their camp and dress up as chelik. They put on turbans, waistcoats and loin-cloths. They borrow boys' armlets for their arms, put knives in their waist-bands, and approach the marriage-booth carrying axes, branches of mango leaves and bunches of *dab* grass. They dance up to the marriage-booth, under which the bridegroom is seated, and ceremonially sweep it. Among the dancers is the bride disguised as a boy. All the dancers are in fact disguised, for they wind their turbans round and round their faces to make it as difficult as possible to tell them apart. As the girls go round and round the booth, they challenge the bridegroom to pick out his bride. He is supposed to be unable to do this, so at last, as the girls draw closer and closer to him, the bride suddenly darts out from among them and hits him on the back with her clenched fist. He jumps up and attempts to hit her back but she escapes and her fellow motiari do their best to protect her. After this the girls continue dancing for some time, then retire to their homes and remove their male disguise.[1]

This practice is called the Nenuldwar, the 'army of the bride and bridegroom', and the dance is the Choli Endanna or the Jhoria Endanna. The name Choli Endanna simply means 'the waistcoat dance' and refers to the male disguise. The word Jhoria probably means lowlander[2] and has been fully explained in Chapter I. It is now no longer used as the title of the tribe, which has become merged with the Muria. There is, however, a Jhorian Pargana or sub-division and it is said that the dance is so called because it originated here. Although the word Jhoria means 'lowlander' in comparison with the Maria of the Abujhmar Mountains, to the Muria and Gond of eastern Bastar it is the name of an older and more primitive people. The expression Jhoria Endanna, therefore, suggests a dance of old time and ancient tradition. It is the most primitive of all the marriage dances.

As the motiari approach and dance round the marriage-booth, which they do very slowly in a long straight line, each girl clutching her left-hand neighbour round the neck with one arm, while with the other she waves her bunch of grass and mango leaves to and fro as if she were sweeping a floor, they sing a number of songs. There is a considerable variety of these and I will give a few examples of different kinds. The first song refers to the ceremonial sweeping of the marriage-booth.

Diwān miyār kilinta dewo!	Diwan's daughter is crying, Dewo!
Wāyu dewa wāyu roy dewo!	Come girl, come Dewo!
Wiyār hayu wāyu roy dewo!	Come to sweep, girl, come Dewo!
Naling ceo goräng roy dewo.	The mandia is like aonra fruit.
Goräng nori ola roy dewoni.	She went to grind the mandia.

men. The chaunt and dance were as before, except that the pantomime abounded in the most indecent gestures and attitudes, all illustrative of sexual relations. One girl slipped (or pretended to) and fell. Whereupon, one of those playing a man's part fell upon her to ravish her. A rescue ensued amidst roars of merriment, and the would-be ravisher was in process of being stripped when our modesty compelled us to call an interval.'—Thurston, op. cit., Vol. IV, pp. 66ff.

According to Santal tradition, witchcraft began through a transvestite expedition. Marang Buru had decided to teach men witchcraft, but the women made them drunk and then 'put on pagris and dhoties and stuck goats' beards on their faces' and went to learn the magic art instead—C. H. Bompas, *Folklore of the Santal Parganas* (London, 1909), p. 422.

[1] At Pardhan marriages in Mandla, the bride is sometimes disguised as a boy and her future husband is challenged to find her. I found a similar test among the Binjhwar of Chhattisgarh. The custom is doubtless widely distributed.

[2] See pp. 15–17.

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THE MURIA'S ATTITUDE TO SEX

Diwān miyār hilinta dewo!	Diwan's daughter is crying, Dewo!
Hirpong ichoh wejing roy dewo.	The rice is like chips of wood.
Wejeng usi ala roy dewo.	She went to husk the rice.
Diwān miyār hilinta dewo!	Diwan's daughter is crying, Dewo!
Purka pila wāterom dewo,	She went with her baby on her back,
Diwān miyār hilinta dewo!	Diwan's daughter is crying, Dewo!

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The next song is about the girls' disguise. The bridegroom cannot recognize the bride now, but he will recognize her all too well when the marriage is consummated.

Burga chodi layor.	The boy is getting old.
Bāba kohore kore!	
Nanāy layor intor.	Yet he calls himself a youth.
Layāh ondah hitor,	He collects the young girls,
Layah tadla kewong.	He won't let them go.
Murka portāna intor.	He calls himself an orphan.
Ona chods māyudr	He says he'll see what happens
Mēwa kere wāyer.	If we come near.
Mākē ise wariyāntor.	He frightens us away.
Dulhin chinke māyer,	He can't recognize the bride,
Mulnāh chinke māntor	But he'll know her tonight
Layor ise ātak.	If he really is a youth.
Wēsi muthka kewer.	We are going to hit him.
Nāndy āri iner.	He says, 'This is my wife'.
Bāba kohore kore!	

The next song explains itself. It must be remembered that each of these songs is being sung by girls led by the bride herself who insists over and over again that she is a boy.

Mutka hilāy wāl tona,	I come to beat him,
Nana jhoriyān layor.	I am the Jhoria boy.
Nākē kurza wariatu,	Seeing me he is afraid,
Nana jhoriyān layor.	I am the Jhoria boy.
Pichil tangiya kānj tona,	I have a small axe on my shoulder,
Nana jhoriyān layor.	I am the Jhoria boy.
Kariya kot kurtana,	I am wearing a black coat,
Nana jhoriyān layor.	I am the Jhoria boy.
Manda kot wānana,	I have come to clean the marriage-booth,
Nana jhoriyān layor.	I am the Jhoria boy.

Another song seems simply to describe the various clothes and ornaments that the girls are wearing:

Aga baga dāng parsing saiya sona?	Whence is the drum that sounds so bravely?
Arra nāding parsing saiya sona.	From Arra comes the drum.
Aga baga dāng kundring saiya sona?	Whence is the *kundring* that sounds so well?
Kohka nāding kundring saiya sona.	From Kohka comes the *kundring*.
Aga baga dāng chithuring saiya sona?	Whence are the cymbals that clash so loudly?
Garun kaiyading chithuring saiya sona.	The blacksmith made the cymbals.

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Aga baga da dhoti roy saiya sona ?	Whence came the dhoti that looks so smart?
Gāndou kaiyada dhoti roy saiya sona.	The Ganda made the dhoti.
Aga waga dīng muyāng roy saiya sona ?	Whence came the bells that tinkle so merrily?
Kaser kaiyadīng muyāng roy saiya sona.	The Kaser made the bells.
Aga baga dīng paniya saiya sona ?	Whence came the comb that looks so fine?
Layon kaiyada paniya roy saiya sona.	The chelik made the comb that looks so fine.

Finally, I will give two examples of the many obscene songs that are sung during this dance, for otherwise it is impossible to get a clear picture of the meaning and atmosphere of the rite.

Nana jhoriyāna waiwoy gāto tiwāna.	I am Jhoria: I will not eat half-cooked rice.
Nana jhoriyāna dais dudo poyrāna.	I am Jhoria: jumping up and down I hold her breast.
Nana jhoriyāna podoh monde dehrāna.	I am Jhoria: I break the girdle round her waist.
Nana jhoriyāna hārspoche tendwāna.	I am Jhoria: I quickly pull off her cloth.
Nana jhoriyāna pudete bonde nekyāna.	I am Jhoria: into her I press myself.
Nana jhoriyāna teks bura mi-kachwāna.	I am Jhoria: I will pluck out my pubic hairs and throw them away.

In the same style is a Halbi Jhoria Git.

Go to sweep the booth, Belosa.
Where has the bridegroom gone?
He is nowhere in the house.
What can he be frightened of?
He is dying for his penis.
He is going to have his sister.
Where has he taken her?
He has taken her to the river bank.
What leaves has he spread for her?
He has made a bed of *jam* leaves.
Jham-jham he swings to and fro.
Bathing, bathing, he inserts it.
Get off, get off, brother, she cries.

These songs are sung by the bride herself and by a party of unmarried girls. They have changed their sex for the occasion and imagine themselves performing the sexual act as men. The significance of this will be seen when we discuss the ultimate basis of the rite.

838 171 182 Various reasons have been advanced by scholars to explain this custom in different parts of the world. Frazer has emphasized the difficulty of the problem. 'The religious or superstitious interchange of dress between men and women is an obscure and complex problem, and it is unlikely that any

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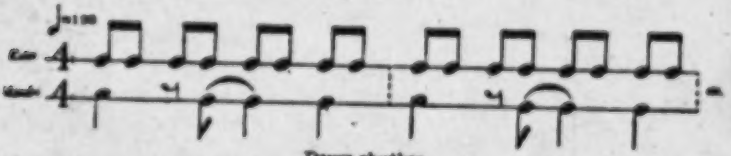
cannot move about. They have, however, devised a most effective form of stationary dance which obtains its effect from the movements of the hands and the swaying, bending and jerking of the body. This is probably why the girls' dances are not synchronized to the boys' drumming. The girls have their special duties and must adapt their songs to these, but the boys can move about independently for a large part of the time.

VI. The Drum Rhythms

In villages in the central area particularly, the Muria distinguish a great many *pâr* or rhythms in their drumming. These rhythms are not connected with the *dîka* steps, though they are sometimes associated with special movements of the dance. Thus, there are *pâr*-rhythms for the Pargao in a marriage, for the dances round the booth, for the great crisis of the Lagir, and to lead bride and bridegroom to the marriage-bed. Different rhythms accompany the worship of Mother Earth.

The *pâr* are known by easily memorized sentences, the words of which have usually no connexion with the dance but describe it by their rhythm. The Jhoria Muria do not seem to know many of these. At Metawand, the chelik only knew of two—'When we beat the drum with both hands', said one of them, 'the drum says *nikun gatha nikun gatha*, copulate properly, and when it is beaten with one hand, it says *deos deos endâl*, dance jumping'.

It is in villages like Kabonga, Bargaon and Hathipakhna and in most of the ghotul of the east-central area that the practice of the *pâr* has been most fully elaborated. At Hathipakhna there was a blind Mandar Guru, an old man who taught the boys their rhythms. He had only to say the words and the chelik immediately followed on their drums.



Drum rhythm

The meaning of many of the rhythms is obscure, and in some cases I can give only an approximate translation.

1. *Pargao Pâr*, used when bride or bridegroom (according to local custom, see page 98) arrives at the other's house, and is greeted by a procession of dancers. The drummers first circle round, all facing one direction; they then split up into pairs and each pair faces his partner. A number of different rhythms are used, for this is a memorable moment in the life of every boy and girl.

(a) *Barka mâne le lukhwun khâwuls tay to ât tay to ât saga le kakâo le parâwuls ?*
You are eating the stolen pork. How will you give it to the saga ?

(b) *Jim jim jim nadum narka, jim jim jim nadum narka.*
Rain is falling in the dead of night.

(c) *Hât jâsis duriya duriya, poj khâwun jâse.*
You are going to a market far far away. Eat your gruel and go.

(d) *Kakâo le yillâsit duriya lâphi duriyâle.*
You have come from far away.

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(e) *Are [illegible] kashār be.*
O father, it will bite.

(f) *Dur dur dur dur neyi kashār be.*
Drive it off; the dog may bite.

2. *Saga Pār*, used when the two fathers-in-law meet officially for the first time. The chelik dance round them in a circle, facing each other in pairs: every now and then they halt and each pair raise their hands off their drums and salute each other, crying on a long steady note *Johār ho saga*.

(a) *Johār ho saga johār.*
Johar, saga, Johar.

(b) *Tay samdhi mai samdhi surti minjun kānwula.*
You are samdhi, I am samdhi, let us eat the powdered tobacco.

(c) *Aking koya korka dārango tuska ta.*
Pluck the leaf, O hoe, to serve the liquor.

(d) *Tahīt layor māndi tuh.*
Boys, lift up your knees.

(e) *Gatla pāta sahle kim dāy pohrs mām.*
Put on your clothes properly before you go away.

(f) *Johār ho saga johār bhat howun duno saga samdhi mand piyun.*
Johar, saga, johar, we've met so let us drink.

(g) *Adi narka bhum narka tara paka kal norka.*
Bring water to wash the feet at midnight and midday, O boy!

3. *Dārango Undāna Pār*, the rhythm for drinking liquor. This also accompanies the ritual drinking of liquor by the two fathers-in-law.

Dumun dumun kāka ta, dumun dumun kāka ta.
Take out liquor from the pot and drink.

4. *Manda Pār.* These are the rhythms used while the boys bring in the wood for the marriage booth—the drummers go to the forest and return dancing and drumming vigorously at the head of the procession; when the platform is plastered inside; and when any of the many minor rites are being performed under its shade.

(a) *Uita gundur gundur ta tin pakor wark wark!*
O the quail! Eat parched rice, O boys!

(b) *Bonyla bandawan jhatke māti da gaitin.*
Let us make a platform; O Gaitin, quickly bring the earth.

(c) *Harde roka paila pakin ponda uita.*
The char flower has blossomed on the way; the girl's vagina has swollen.

(d) *Chich ponda kawrela.*
The vagina is a cowrie facing upwards.

(e) *And and and, ayo ayo ayo!*
That's it! That's it! No it isn't! No it isn't!

(f) *Gaon cho manuk aiyin.*
All the headmen of the village.

(g) *Nawun nawun chepdawa.*
Take her, press her.

(h) *Ad laya kotla kandih surti detta.*
That girl is beautiful, give her some tobacco.

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(i) *Manda mandi tendsim dāy pohre mām.*
Throw away the mess in the booth and go away.

5. *Nayi Tarhina Pār.* The tedious business of anointing bride and bridegroom with oil, which continues intermittently for two days, is enlivened by some excellent dancing.

(a) *Tada mudiya tatti de.*
Stand old man and give the adze.

(b) *Gām chchli basunde ta.*
We will sit while the sun is shining.

(c) *Bavha mānz he chorun neyse lāchhu dy lāchhu mai hi dāda mai to ni chorey.*
It was Lachhu, not I, that stole the pork.

(d) *Dim dim dim kosum dim tumcho bāpcho polha dim.*
Testes! Testes! Kosum testes! The hollow testes of your father!

(e) *Dengur mundi me lamha āss, chu hābri chu.*
In the ant-hill is a hare, *Chu hābri chu.*

(f) *Tada bhuski hātum dāyi.*
Stand up, fat woman, and go to the bazaar.

(g) *Karanji gaon cho kursa, gaon kāje purza.*
He is impotent in Karanji village; but he is a real man in ours.

FIG. 141. *Pitorha* gong

6. *Mauv Tatkna Pār.* The rhythm while the bride and bridegroom are having their crowns tied on their heads.

Tatti de tatti de kawnār bilhu kawnār.
Give the adze, give the adze. But the boy won't go.

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7. *Lagir Pār.* The climax of the marriage is when the bride and bridegroom are escorted round the booth seven times in a procession of chelik with their drums and by loudly singing motiari.

(a) *Mai samdhi tuy samdhin johār bhet howun leha he pāni rihāwun.*
We samdhi do Johar, pour the water over the boy.

(b) *Baniagāon cho ban bhainsa bāte chāra charate gucha bai hadendata hadendata.*
The wild buffalo of Baniagaon is grazing on the way. Move aside, girl, and I will drive it off.

(c) *Yergonda inta tīne tinta, hamba inta, tīne tinta.*
Say it is a water-snake and eat it. Say it is turmeric and eat it.

(d) *Korwāl kusir korasta agay mute narasta.*
The *korwāl* vegetable has sprouted; the girl went every day to see it.

(e) *Bāte valo durhi chu chu chu ta ta ta.*
The panther is on the road. *Chu chu ta ta ta.*

(f) *Johār leyor johār hor phat phate manta.*
O boys Johar! It is cock-crow time.

(g) *Tala buda hātwa te.*
Stand up, old man, and go to market.

8. *Kor Puda Pār.* Bride and bridegroom are not allowed to slip away quietly to bed; they must be escorted thither with the roar of drums. In these *pār* the boys from time to time raise both hands from their drums and wave their arms in the air like excited cocks—an obvious reference to the cock they are going to steal.

(a) *Adan lata dam-dama tarni bāyla gum guma.*
The charred saja wood is strong, the young girl is hard and firm.

(b) *Dulhi dudh he dulha dhare dulhi thar thare.*
The bridegroom holds the breasts of the bride and the bride trembles.

(c) *Dhirey dhirey dhirey guncha, chānd chānd chānd guncha.*
Penetrate slowly! Penetrate quickly!

(d) *Dengur mund cho howu, bhitre nowun gab gab dewu.*
The root in the ant-hill; take it inside and press it hard.[1]

This is the end of the rhythms used in marriages. The following *pār* can also, of course, be used in marriages, but they are not connected with specific moments of the ceremony. They represent the purely recreational side of the dancing.

9. *Gondin Pār.* The drummers circle in a line of couples facing each other.

Gondin gondin bolaut bāy he gondin bolaut? Buchak mand daas tahto gondin halāte.
To whom will you say Gondin, Gondin? If she will give a little liquor then you can call her Gondin.

10. *Mānder Palni Pār.* The drummers first stand still facing each other in pairs. Suddenly they flourish their hands in the air and move quickly round with short steps, knees bent. Then they straighten their knees and dance to left and right on alternate feet.

[1] It is said that the chelik sometimes use these rhythms as a sort of secret language to make proposals to the maiden. Even when no words are spoken they are understood: even the tapping of the rhythm with the fingers is enough.

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Plate CXLIV

Chelik of Nayanar squirts water at a motiari

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Old people throw mud at each other at a Malakot wedding

[p. 638 (N)]

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776 in praise of the mahua tree, before which the new mahua flowers must not be eaten or used for liquor. Then comes a similar ceremony in honour of the mango. This generally falls in March. It may be preceded by a ceremonial fishing expedition. In April, preceded by a ritual hunt, comes the great Seed Festival, the Wijja Pandum, at which the seed then to be sown is consecrated.

At the beginning of the rains many of the Maria now observe the Halba festival of Hareli or Amavas. As the crops ripen, there begins a series of Harvest Festivals or (as a literal translation of their Gondi name would have it) 'New Eating' Festivals. The first of these is for the small millets that ripen early. The next is for the new gourds and cucumbers. It is followed, at about the beginning of November, by the Nuka Nordana Pandum, a festival which falls at about the time of Diwali and is concerned with the new rice. Before this ceremony, the rice of the new harvest must not be husked or washed.

Towards the end of the year comes the Jata Pandum for new beans and pulses, and the Kare Pandum before which no one is allowed to cut grass or bamboo, or begin making clearings for cultivation in the forest.

In addition to this round of celebrations there are the festivals of the clan-gods, the Pen Karsita or Divine Games, which may be held at any time, and the commercial Mandai which are often combined with the clan festivals but are mainly great bazaars.

Dassara is the chief official festival of the State. It lasts fifteen days and is attended by elaborate ceremonies in which each of the aboriginal tribes has its special part to play. All the Maria headmen attend the celebrations in their official capacity, and there is a special Darbar at which they have the opportunity to place their grievances before the administration.

IV

585 The great dance that has given the Bison-horn Maria their
535 name is really a marriage dance. At its best it is a superb spectacle. The men, in their splendid head-dresses of bison horns and carrying their long drums, move in a large circle

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535 but with a great variety of turns and changes: the 'bison'
585 charge and fight each other, pick up rings or leaves on the points of their horns, and chase the girl dancers. The girls, each with a dancing-stick in her right hand, form a long line and go round and through the men dancers with many different movements and steps. They do not usually sing, and indeed the tune would be lost in the thunder of the drums. As they go, they beat the ground with their sticks *dum-dum-dum, di-dum, dum-dum*. Masked mummers, clowns dressed in straw, naked acrobats with enormous imitation genitalia, add to the gaiety of the scene. There is no finer dance in India.

293 The head-dress of bison horns is the chief treasure of a Maria home. It is kept with the utmost care, dismantled, in closed bamboo baskets, and it takes nearly an hour to assemble it. Horns are rare nowadays in Bastar and have to be imported from Jeypore. A Maria may give a bull in exchange for a pair of good horns; they should be white at the bottom turning to black half way up.

A bamboo frame forms the base of the head-dress. The horns are attached to the front and a great tuft of feathers rises behind. Cloth, often old and costly silk, is tied round and round and a tail hangs down behind. Across the front a fringe of cloth adorned with cowries covers the dancer's eyes.

The feathers used are those of the peacock and of domestic
[237] cocks specially castrated for the purpose. It is considered
[787] unlucky for a feather to fall to the ground during a dance, and before they begin the dancers address the Earth Mother and the Ancestors: 'Save us from the dangers of magic and let none of the feathers fall'.

428 A man's head-dress passes to his son or brother's son after
682 his death. His bow and arrow and his drum are also heir-
762 looms and are highly valued. The loss of a head-dress drove one Maria youth to suicide, and a dispute about possession of an outfit of buttocks-bells led another to murder.

184 In the north of the area, many Maria dance both with bison
535 horns and in Hill Maria fashion. The latter wear the skirt, decorated cap and streamers, and buttocks-bells characteristic of the Abujhmar Hills.

534 The Maria are not very good at musical instruments. They use a small fiddle called *kikir*, a Jews-harp made of iron or

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girl's first menstruation is marked by special rites of purification. There is little conscious education of the young who grow up in natural freedom and learn by imitation. Marriage is generally adult, but is arranged by the parents and the cross-cousin marriage is common. Betrothal ceremonies are simple. The boy's father goes with gifts and a traditional formula is used—'We have heard there is a flower growing in your garden. We have come to pluck it and put it in our hair'. If a boy's family cannot afford the bride-price required, they may send him to serve as a Lamhada in the house of his future wife. His period of service is for three or five years, and the marriage is often celebrated before it is complete. Marriage by capture, which was probably the traditional method, has not yet died out, and occasionally there is a case of the reverse tradition when a girl comes as a Paitu and forces herself upon a man who is bound to marry her. Widow-remarriage is permitted and indeed enjoined, the husband's younger brother having the first claim on the person and property of the widow. Divorce is rare but is available to either husband or wife. The wife usually achieves it by eloping with another man and the husband in most cases accepts a *fait accompli*.

The actual marriage ceremony is also simple. There is no annointing with turmeric or oil, no perambulation of the sacred pole. Customs vary from place to place, but the traditional marriage has probably only three elements—a celebration which includes feasting, drinking and dancing, the pouring of water from the roof of a house or shed onto the bridal pair and the ceremonial consummmation of the marriage at which bride and bridegroom are forcibly shut up in a room together.

VI

Funeral ceremonies are more elaborate, and since this book is concerned with death, we will consider them in greater detail.

Maria thinking about the destiny and state of the soul after death is as confused as that of more sophisticated people. At least three contradictory views of the subject are held at the same time. I think that the oldest and characteristically

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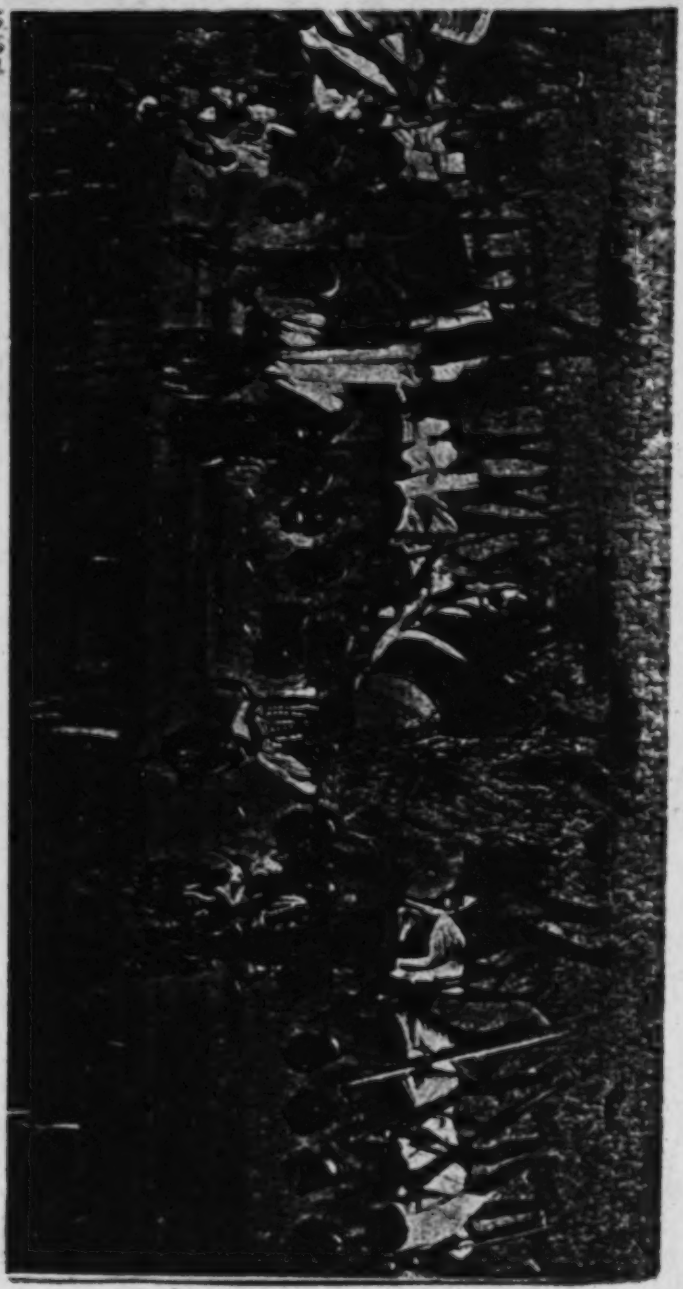

The famous 'bison-horn' marriage dance

[facing p. 144]